

## Throughout history

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# Throughout history

by [Kammyh](#)

## Summary

It had all begun during that blasted change of millennium, in England's opinion, and it was bound to last until the end of their history

## Notes

Disclaimer: I do not own Hetalia, I just own an unhealthy devotion to France as a nation and its history. English is not my mother language and neither is French, any constructive criticism is appreciated. Special thanks to Stars of Yaoi/Lacertae who kindly did the beta reading for this story despite how annoying I can be

Warnings: France is going to speak random French because... well, he's France

## Starting at Bouvines. 1214

It had all begun during that blasted change of millennium. Or so England wanted to believe, so not to admit that everything had been a natural progression of things from the very first day they had met. A progression so natural that neither of them could actually pinpoint a real starting moment. That was why England had appointed the passage of millennium as the cause, just because he needed something to blame and usually such a thing worked quite well for plenty of people for all kinds of reasons, so: why couldn't it work for him?

After all, it had been their first proper attempt at cohabitation, a cohabitation England had accepted to stop France's whining and his cries out of fear of the unknown. Still, the panicked words France had spoken to him had kept running through his mind for quite some time, both during their cohabitation and even after he had finally ejected the French nation out of his borders – with love, of course.

“It's all I've ever wanted, to have you!” The bloody Frenchman had blurted out amongst his whines. England had frozen up and docilely capitulated. And no acceptance of anything else had been better, despite the facts that France kept molesting him as always and that they had kept quarrelling on a regular basis, even after the Normans had actually conquered Britannia.

It was during that time that England's heart stopped for the first time in his chest while France was smiling at him as he served him dinner, all the while blabbing about how England had to learn how to cook it properly if he wished to grow up beautiful and strong like him.

It hadn't been the first time his heart had stopped seeing France smiling at him, far from it, but usually the gratuitous insults that followed had always managed to make him come back to his senses. That had been the first where not even those had made him stop staring transfixed at France. And France had noticed it, apparently, had blushed a deep scarlet and finished serving the meal quickly to England before going back to his seat and digging into his own.

Before things could get worse, England had freed himself from France's dominion. And had grown up.

And things had started going to hell ever since.

France's teasing kept making his head spin, his smile froze him on the spot, and all his carefree joy went straight to England's nerves. Especially since each and every time they were at war against one another England was the one who fell, both literally and metaphorically.

Except a few times England had caught France staring at him and blushing, France just seemed as ethereal as he had always been, no different from his fairy friends and even less predictable. At the end of the battle of Bouvines, while their armies fought on the battlefield, they had escaped the proper battle to bicker with one another in private far from their sovereigns' eyes on the top of a nearby hill. As England lost his balance and France reached out for him, they ended up rolling down the slope. When they eventually reached the foot of

the hill, France was atop England, grinning childishly at him, as if all of it had been a game and not a cruel battle to own the other.

“I win, England.” France sniggered as he opened his blue eyes to stare down at his friend. Their intensity made England actually feel the truth of those words in all the possible meanings.

Some locks of hair slipped from behind France’s ears, framing his chiselled features, their shadow over his eyes making them shine more than usual, coupled with his dishevelled appearance.

England gave up fighting and just closed his eyes, accepting the defeat and surrendering to the mood. True to what his expectations had been, France bent over him to kiss him chastely on his lips. England answered back automatically, and then their hands began touching and exploring each other’s body, craving to know as much as they could in the briefest time possible. Eventually England’s hands found their way through France’s soft hair and their kiss grew even more intense.

France begged to deepen the kiss and England offered no resistance, opening his mouth to his childhood friend almost immediately. France was not as confident or greedy as one would expect from a kiss stolen during a history-changing battle –he teased England’s tongue with his own uncertainly, testing, seeking more confirmation from his friend that he was alright with it.

Nevertheless, it frustrated England to no end. Therefore, the island nation tugged France’s body even more against his own and, with a firm grip on France's hair he kept his head in place as he took control of the kiss, forcing his friend to answer his passion with the same desperation he was feeling.

It soon became a war of tongues, fighting for dominance. France took care to change the rhythm frequently, sometimes separating their lips long enough to leave a more chaste kiss on the tip of England’s tongue or on his shining red lips, making his friend soon losing focus of everything else around them, so swayed he was by the continuous changes and the increasing pleasure and expectations that were building inside his body.

Whenever France interrupted the teasing to deepen the kiss even more, England couldn't help but moan in surprise, his soft gasps of pleasure answered with France's barely contained growls.

Only when they heard the cries of the battle dying down in the distance and the sound of the French general voice calling out their victory, did they decide to part. France exhaled deeply and rested his forehead against England’s one, looking serious for the first time since they had met.

“I will never stop wanting you,” France murmured, seemingly saddened by the admission of his own feelings. “In every way possible.”

“Then we have a problem,” England answered in the same tone, his body still tingling with a sensation that he could only call lust, despite it being his first time feeling it so strongly.

“Because I will never stop wanting you too... In every way possible.”

France chuckled at England's words and then his face fell as he reached out with one hand to stroke his friend's cheek.

“This *really* is a problem... you are worth turning Europe and the whole world into a battlefield, *mon cher*,” France whispered seductively in his ear, then his lips ran down the length of England's neck, making him melt even more under his ministrations.

“Likewise,” England moaned back, as they resumed touching and kissing whatever piece of flesh they could reach with their lips, uncaring of the calls for both of them from their generals coming from the battlefield.

They broke apart hastily only when they felt steps approaching from the other side of the hill or rather France had felt them, considering that they were on French soil and not much could happen without the French nation's knowledge. This, at least, when he let himself focus on his surroundings, something that rarely happened.

They only had enough time to conceal their growing erections the best they could and start their way back up the hill before they met the angry French King, still barded for battle.

“*Bonjour*, Philip,” France greeted, pretending complete innocence.

King Philip II took a good look at his nation and then at England.

“Is it in my best interest knowing what you two have been doing?”

“To each their own battle, *mon ami*. You won yours, I won mine,” France explained shortly. His words seemed to be enough for the French king, who simply nodded as they began walking back up the hill, taking care to keep England between himself and his nation.

“Captives will be brought to Paris, I plan quite the show off,” King Philip took his chance to explain to France. “What do you plan to do with him? England in chains might be the peak of our performance.”

England, shocked, turned towards the French king, feeling for the first time in his life as if he was in serious danger. Nevertheless, a friendly hand fell on his shoulder, ready to calm him down.

“You can't expose him as England, you know it's not permitted. Having him amongst the prisoners at the parade won't make anything better,” France countered seriously. “We'll bring him to Paris, and then we'll contract with King John his release, along with the one of the most notable prisoners we have captured.”

“You're no fun at all,” King Philip answered back before starting a long rant against the Holy Roman Empire that France nor England followed at all.

Once he was secured inside France's tent and they were once again alone, England eventually let out the breath he hadn't even known he was holding.

“Thanks for saving me from that shame,” England offered his friend. “But you should have accepted your king decision. I completely lost and barbaric parades are your forte.”

“You speak about barbaric practices.” France chuckled as he changed from his armour to one of his loose and soft tunics. The style had changed over the course of those last few years, but France still looked damn good in them, and in anything longer than the waistline, be it shirts or dresses.

What was worse, in England's opinion, was that they both had grown in the last few years: France didn't look like a girl anymore – not much, at least – and England's boyish features had hardened just enough to make him look more a teenager than a child. He was still smaller than France was but the difference in their height had shortened considerably despite the French nation's own growth.

What still bothered England, on a matter of physique, was how he was now strong enough to be a real challenge to France, but no matter how much he had trained, his body kept itself slender and thin, making him feel not much of a threat to his nemesis.

His nemesis, who had grown in these years some biceps and hard muscles he couldn't help noticing while he changed. England could barely stop the urge to test with his hands how those hard muscles felt under those comfortable-looking clothes.

“This battle changes everything, *mon cher*,” France continued, unaware of England's stare on him as he freed his hair from beneath his tunic, making them fall gently over his shoulders. “We will have time to hurt one another properly in the future. We don't want to ruin that kind of fun before it begins.”

England realised that while what France had said made no sense, he still understood the meaning of his friend's words. Maybe he was the only one who could understand that, because he felt the same. Now that England was an adult and had proven to be a potential asset to anyone willing to oppose France, things were bound to get ugly. Still, they were not their armies or their sovereigns. What their people wanted and felt fuelled their emotions and changed their way of feeling, but they were not that either.

They had to live through the palpable tensions rising between their people, even when those tensions translated into something sexual for them. Even when they had known one another for a lifetime and they could still call each other friends. Even though England could certainly name what he felt for France with a different word.

They were nations, but the way they went about their feelings and the ones of their people was still quite human.

“If a nation feels too strongly for something, it might be its downfall,” England told France eventually, earning his friend's sad stare.

“Then ruin me next time, England,” France answered him, closing the space between them. “Because I hope to ruin you just as much.”

France cupped his neighbour's chin with his hands to bring their lips together once again in a sweet and gentle kiss, one he didn't have the courage to deepen.

He soon broke it and stared back into England's eyes, looking unsure of himself in a way that seemed almost unnatural considering how France used to be normally. He swallowed and kissed England once again chastely on his lips, as if he was attempting to regain the courage he had lost.

*"Je t'aime, Angleterre,"* France whispered against his lips eventually, staring at his friend with a desperation and a seriousness England was unused to see on France's face.

England stared back at him, his green eyes growing larger in surprise. If this was what losing brought him, then losing didn't sound so bad. He had done everything he could to get France's attention and by losing he thought he had been diminished in France's eyes.

Apparently, he had just been an idiot. An idiot like France was, however, since he was still staring back at him, as if he feared some kind of rejection. As if any smart person in this world could even conceive the idea to refuse France, men, women or nations alike. Refusing fair France was a notion unknown to the world, at least in England's opinion.

"I love you too, idiot," England answered back, feeling on his own lips the ghost of France's smile right before the French nation kissed him again.

The kiss became quickly more intense this time as England parted his lips for France almost immediately and their tongues met once again in a maddening dance. Finally, England could give into his deepest desire and touch France freely, enjoying the contrast between France's strong and muscular body and the delicate fabric he was now clothed in.

Starting from his sides he moved up to his chest, the hardened nubs welcoming him as soon as he began teasing his lover's nipples. He then wandered back to his abs and after that up again, only to close even more the space between the two of them and move to explore his broad shoulders and delicate back, finishing with a soft moan into France's mouth as he took a firm grip of his ass cheeks.

In the meantime, France was all but standing still. The French nation attempts at manhandling his lover, however, were slightly more difficult than England's, since his lover was still dressed in his torn armour.

While the island nation made him feel cared and appreciated like no one else, France took his time to undo the shoulder protection, the chest plate and, most satisfactorily, also the groin protection. He was glad about his priorities when his lover pushed into him, and he could feel almost all of England's frame against his own, something that made his head spin and his cock harden.

He enveloped England in his arms and then let his hands wander up to his back and then lower to appreciate briefly his firm buttocks under the thin layers of harsh cotton of England's shirt and pants.

“Still too many clothes, *mon cher*,” France took his chance to protest, as he kissed England with renewed vigour, entangling his fingers in his blond unruly tresses.

England let France free to do as he pleased and he took a firmer grip on the French nation’s butt to press their groins one against the other.

France whimpered in need and put all his remaining brain cells together to disentangle from England. In front of the eyes of a surprised England, France went to the corner of his tent in order to take two pieces of cloth and wet them into the nearby bucket of water. When he had properly dried it, he went back to England and handed him one of them.

“I’ll offer you a proper warm bath once back to Paris, *mon amour*,” He told him, stumbling only a bit on the words meaning ‘*my love*’. “For now we’ll have to make do with this.”

“Thanks,” England answered, easily guessing the purpose of all that, then he took the wet cloth and finished stripping –not that France had left much on him- from his under-armour clothes. “Do I stink that much?”

France quietly chuckled as he stripped of his tunic too, and then quickly proceeded to take away the worst of the grime from his own skin.

“Quite the opposite, *mon cher*, I like the smell of victory,” France teased, grinning back at him in a way that made England shiver down to his bones. “Still, I hoped for this to be a bit more than just me claiming my victory over you and I must smell *dreadful*.”

England had actually been far too aroused to think about the smell, but even if he hadn’t, he would have had nothing to protest, since in all honesty France was France, and had the ability to smell like roses even on the battlefield. That blasted Frenchman. He hadn’t fought against many nations so far, but France really was something else, dancing on the battleground like he was on the stage of a theatre.

“You worry too much for me, considering I’m the one who lost,” England countered, pretending to be annoyed even as he blushed furiously. “I don’t plan on being nice when I’ll best you.”

“Me neither,” France answered him, throwing the cloth to the floor far from them to go back and embrace England. “But when I’ll do it, I want you to remember that it will be with love.”

England let his own cloth join France’s and closed the gap between the two of them, returning his lover’s embrace. Now that they were both naked, every sensation felt heightened, so much that France found himself unable even to kiss England, for fear of losing it before anything even started.

“Your cot,” England moaned over France’s slightly parted lips, feeling no better than France did.

The French nation nodded and led his lover to his cot, making him slip under his blankets, in case after making love they both fell asleep. He had given up bragging about his victory to



turn this into a pleasurable experience for the both of them, he wasn't about to let his lover catch a cold.

As they were both comfortable under the blankets, they resumed kissing and exploring each other's bodies, much to France's delight since he'd had no time to savour his friend's older body properly before. Eventually, France managed to trap England under him and the English nation could just moan in frustration.

"France, c'mon, I won't last much like this," England whispered in his ear, feeling France chuckle against the skin of his collarbone that he was molesting.

"It will be my pleasure, *mon amour*," France answered him as his hands began searching beneath his pillow for something. When he finally found it, he presented England with a small bottle of oil.

Before England could ask what his friend's intentions were, France resumed kissing him as he opened the bottle and poured some generous amount of oil on his fingers before teasing England's entrance. The island nation winced at the feeling and groaned his frustration.

In order to add to it – France had promised not to brag and to make it pleasant, not that he would be fair – the French nation moved further down, so that he was level with England's groin. Before the island nation could protest, he took him resolutely in his mouth, making England gasp in surprise and pleasure. Distracted like he was, he almost didn't notice France adding another digit and then scissoring him properly. When he added a third finger, though, he noticed, but mostly because he had loosened up enough that France had managed to stimulate his prostate properly.

"Fuck it, France!" England swore, grasping a handful of France's wavy hair to make him move back upwards and away from his cock and glare at him. "Fucking fuck me, idiot, I have no intention of being tortured by you!"

France chuckled amusedly and left a brief peck on England's lips.

"You're so cute, though, that to stop now would be a pity..."

England's eyes grew larger as he glared back at France, who simply sniggered and trapped him into a happy embrace. England rolled his eyes, but eventually held him back, before taking France's chin between his thumb and forefinger to make France stare back at him once again and kiss him properly.

France melted into the sweet kiss, enjoying each second of it, especially when England groaned in irritation tasting himself in France's mouth. When he'd had enough of bothering England, he resumed a more proper position between England's legs, allowing England's hips to rise just enough that his cock was ready at his entrance.

"Ready, *mon cher*?"

"I was ready an hour ago," England bit back, earning a playful lick on the tip of his nose before France actually followed through his intentions and entered him, sheathing himself

fully inside his lover in few careful movements that were made easier by the god-sent oil France had had the intuition to prepare beforehand.

England swore half-heartedly at the intrusion, as he attempted to adjust to the new sensation. When he opened once again his eyes to look at his lover, he found France's eyes closed shut in deep concentration. He reached up to cup his face and to guide him down, so that he could leave a caring kiss on his forehead.

A blue eye cracked open and England offered him a warm smile.

"Do I feel good, France?" He teased evilly, managing a smug smirk seeing the older nation so affected.

France swallowed hard and nodded, his shoulders slightly trembling as he tried not to move.

"Then show me," England continued, almost whining, as he stared deeply into his lover's eyes.

France took it as the sign he was waiting for and began thrusting into England, first slowly and then in earnest as soon as he was certain that England could take it. It didn't take him much to lose completely focus of what he was doing, however, as he completely abandoned any attempt to build a steady rhythm in favour of just going with the flow and wherever England's moan and whispers lead him.

For someone who was starting to be recognised as the country of love, he surely wasn't able to prevent himself from being swept away by it. Still, France really couldn't help it.

England's heat around his cock and his soft voice calling his name were a reality he had never dreamed to experience least of all like *this*. He had dreamed plenty of times about how their first time would be like, but his own imagination had never prepared him for the real deal. He had never even hoped that they could have their first time, much less having it so soon into their lives.

They had known one another for a lifetime, a lifetime of teasing that had lately been unbearable. He had so hoped that it hadn't been frustrating only for him and that it had been frustrating for England at least enough for the island nation to give up his pride and admit their mutual attraction. England had surpassed his best expectations, however, ending up confessing his love for him. Therefore, there was nothing stopping France to take his friend, nothing except his own resistance to the deep desperation brought by his feelings.

France felt inadequate for the first time in his life, but that feeling only fuelled his desire to become better, something that only England could cause him to feel, in love as well as in war. He would become the country of love, he would learn to love England so fiercely that England would always stay at his side... as for now, though, he only hoped he could endure long enough.

With the hand still slippery with oil, France eventually began stroking England, hoping to save his own pride and bring England to his climax before his self-control broke. The added stimulation eventually sent England over the edge and, hearing his lover's cries of ecstasy,

France himself finally let himself go, releasing inside his lover with England's name on his lips.

He didn't have enough strength left to do anything else then collapse over his lover, though, he just let himself go and allowed England tiredly hold him.

*“Je t’aime. Je t’aime, Angleterre,”* France managed to whisper into his ear after a while, his lips gracing lightly his lover's ear shell.

“I love you too, France,” England answered back, barely managing to leave a kind caress on his lover's head before falling asleep into France's caring embrace.

He had never been as glad to lose as he was now.

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**T.B.C.**

# Matters of ownership

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The following days made England feel like a traitor to his own people.

The other English prisoners were treated harshly, the same way they would treat their own prisoners, and to add insult to injury, they were also forced to walk through the streets of Paris to parade the French's triumph.

England, on the other hand, was kept under close guard into France's tent and then into his rooms inside the castle, deprived of his freedom but safe and sound, shielded from any spite or further humiliation by France's orders.

He had wanted to tell France off and yell at him to start treating him as a proper hostage, but the benefits were too pleasurable to just throw them away without second thoughts.

Moreover, England knew that those benefits were not intended to last. He and France had agreed to date privately whenever they weren't at war with one another, but they both knew that they lived in difficult times and that they had to behave according to their people's wishes.

And their people certainly wanted war, at least to a certain extent. They feared one another and envied their neighbour deeply, and such a contrasting feeling was turned into war by their sovereigns and into love by their nations.

He kept his mouth shut, then, also enjoying the strange occurrence of them not fighting over something trivial. It would be hard to meet again, they both knew it well, and after having known what being together was like, it would be even more annoying.

The blissful intermission they had granted to one another eventually came to an end and England left to his home island the next week. This was something that had unnerved even England himself, who had stormed on the English boat without even saying hello to his officials.

The higher ranks, then, began spreading the idea that the Frenchmen had just annoyed their nation the whole time he had been kept captive, but none of them dared to confront England on the matter. They had been even less willing to talk about it after they had noticed the devastation England had brought to his own quarters, in a desperate attempt to calm down his fears about France's fidelity to him and weaken the desire for his lover still burning inside him.

If England had answered to their separation with plain violence against himself and his properties, France had instead given himself up to melancholy, drowning his sorrows in wine and chatting up young boys and girls. He never went further than a flirty wink, but it made

him remember that he was still good to look at, somehow reassuring him that England would still like him the next time they saw one another.

This was how they had planned to go on for the time being, but the following centuries turned out to be something completely void of any kind of rationality.

Whenever they weren't together, attempting to love one another as well as getting on each other's nerves, they busied themselves in their respective homes planning ways to get the other's attention solely on them.

The French court and people by now took every mad plan their nation concocted against England in stride, thinking that however fixated their nation might seem it played well with their political strategy and the people thinking that, well, it was the Britons they were talking about.

England, on the other end, took the matter in a much more collected way than his lover did. As soon as he had gotten back home, he had taken representatives both from the nobles' court and from the rising merchant class in order to quell any internal problem might arise. Only when the Magna Charta was signed did he let himself go to a laughter so mad sounding that it made his people and his court both wonder if he'd gone as crazy as the French nation was.

Still, the freeing laughter was well earned in England's opinion: Britain's crown now had no fear to be dethroned by a civilian insurrection, something that not many other nations could rely upon. And internal stability would eventually make the difference in his quest to conquer France as his own. In heart, mind, body... and lands. This was a difficult decision he had agreed on with his sovereign mostly to keep his own sanity.

They had kept meeting randomly to chat, play and just bother one another, in a way no different than they had done during the previous centuries, at least on the surface. Still, France's teasing had turned sexual – and sensual, England's remarks had become more on the spot and full of double meanings, and the fact that whenever they could they hid away to kiss, touch and make love only made them so desperate that not even violence and wine could satisfy them anymore.

Some more than a century had to pass before England decided to butt head-first into France's business. He didn't really feel guilty for seconding his king's requests since France had been the first to actually try conquering him, still he felt like he had to talk with his lover before things became unexpectedly brutal.

The randomness of his thoughts had prevented England to fall asleep after France had messed him up thoroughly. France had become increasingly better – not that he had been unsatisfied their first time – and had learned to play each and every weak point England wasn't even aware he had.

He couldn't sleep, but he couldn't move a single finger due to the deep tiredness he was feeling. He turned his head with difficulty to look at his lover and found him deep asleep. Were England a lesser man, he would have gathered all his strength to tie France up and ask for his lands to his king in exchange for his freedom. It could be done, but it would be quite

too much interference in history... wouldn't it? The temptation was strong and he had some probability of success.

He gathered some more energy to move to his side and watch his lover better, taking his chance to caress the soft skin of France's cheek with the tip of his fingers. There was no chance that France could stay his: he was a small island isolated and forgotten by most of his neighbours, France descended from the Roman Empire and had the chance to easily conquer the rest of Europe just like his grandfather had done.

Lead by pure fear, England attempted to stand up from the comfortable bed and actually go and gather a cord or something, but the hand he had just caressed France with was quickly trapped in the tight grasp of the French nation.

"Don't leave so soon," France whined, not even bothering to open his eyes. "Stay with me a little longer..."

England sighed deeply and let himself fall back sitting on France's bed.

"That's exactly what I wanted to ensure," He admitted, hiding his face behind his free hand.

Those words worried France enough to make him open his eyes and rise himself up on one elbow, in order to look at England better.

"*Mon amour?*" France asked uncertain, tugging England towards him to hold him.

After a few unsuccessful tugs, England eventually accepted the invite – more out of irritation than because he actually wanted to keep on the facade of the cute boyfriend – and let himself drop over France. The French nation smirked satisfied at him and laid more comfortably on his back, so that England could stare at him properly from his position on top of him.

"There's nothing to smirk about, idiot," England groaned in anger, only succeeding in making France chuckle.

"Why not? I don't mind our current position."

"Like I would ever doubt it."

"Why don't you tell me what crosses your mind? I could help, especially if it relates to me..."

"You *can't* help," England admitted sighing deeply. "It's me, not you."

Uncertain, France stared at him in silence for some time, and England felt an unpleasant weight in his stomach at the flash of pain pass through France's shining blue eyes.

"France-"

"Are you leaving me?" France asked with a voice so filled with shock and hurt that the lump in England's stomach felt even heavier.

“What the hell, France! What are you thinking?!” England yelled at him, punching him on his head for good measure.

France accused the hit, now looking mortified. It was still a better expression to look at than the distraught one from before.

“Then what's the problem? You really looked like you wanted to dump me.”

“I *don't* want to dump you, idiot. If I wanted to do it, I wouldn't be so conflicted about this, because I would have already made up my mind!”

“Then what is it?”

“I want to own you,” England admitted candidly. “I don't trust you not going gallivanting around when I'm not looking, and especially I don't trust other people not to attempt conquering you. If someone has to get you, I want to be the one.”

“England, *mon cher*, don't you think you are worrying too much?” France protested, arching a confused eyebrow at England. “I'm not really someone easy to conquer”

“The point is... That I wouldn't stand it, if it happened,” England admitted. “I want this to last, no matter what I have to do to have it.”

“You will declare war on me, you mean,” France translated, reaching up to caress England's head and play with his unruly hair. “It's fair enough since I do the same thing... Still, I have fair chances to win, *mon amour*, while you don't have any at the moment.”

“How dare you!?” England protested, sitting up to escape France's caresses. “I'll show you what England can do, you will be so surprised about it that you will be glad to be the first of my dominions!”

“Yeah yeah, *Angleterre*,” France chuckled merrily, making England stare back surprised at him. France noticed England's confusion and grinned at him, before rising on his elbows enough to kiss his lover on his lips. England answered back almost immediately, allowing him to deepen it and have a good taste.

“France?” He asked as they eventually parted.

“I never said I wanted to avoid war with you, I think I showed it enough in these last few years,” France explained. “Moreover, if I get a good upper hand on you, do you know what it will mean?”

“That I'll become your dominion,” England answered diligently.

“Yep. I don't mind this possible outcome.”

“It will never happen, France.”

“Likewise, *mon amour*. Still, I'm all for trying.” He took once again England's lips in a searing kiss that made the English nation moan in delight. “Besides, war is fun...”

“War is a necessity to ensure your power,” England protested, grimacing at France. “Hell, what do I have to do with you?”

“Whatever you want, *Angleterre*. Love and war are equally appreciated...”

“I hate you!” England yelled at France, blushing deeply as he lashed out against him. “You are an insufferable git, you know? I should have just tightened you up and asked your lands as ransom...”

“Was this your intention before? What a naughty lover I have, at least molest me properly before giving me back to my people!”

“Well, I could do that now...”

“Please, be my guest~”

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It was a matter of years before proper war broke: long, devastating and without any regrets.

Politics and history played around them and took their toll on them and on their feelings, turning them crumpled but stronger and, inevitably, more desperate.

The first few outcomes seemed to favour France’s heartfelt deliberations, but eventually England’s careful planning managed to earn him more favourable scores. Outwitting the other in their free time and during battles was becoming the sole goal of their life and they used it to work out the building tension inside them that they would never have a chance to be a proper couple. That made the times they came together in secret even sweeter -a delicate balance- and it made the war crueller.

The hundred years’ war had to end before things could change once again and they could return to some sort of frizzling equilibrium.

“France?” England called out, as soon as he was far away from the shore where his court had landed for some diplomatic mission he had excluded himself from. “Oi! I know you are around here!”

He kept walking amidst the soft grass searching for his lover until he found the French nation sleeping soundly in the sun. Golden wavy locks were in sharp contrast with the green of the grass surrounding them, and a tiny bit of France’s chest was visible through the collar of his white shirt. The light blue long waistcoat fit him perfectly, hiding the upper part of his white pants.

France was beautiful, now more than ever, even though reason demanded England to call him handsome instead.



England laid down by his side and took the chance to caress the soft skin of France's face, glad that after the last war he had finally decided to resume shaving. France had won the last war, but even he had been left quite scarred by the events. He had let some time pass before meeting his lover, of course, though the Anglo-French relationship remained tense, both because France and England still hadn't given up on one another and because the war had been tiresome for both of them. It had been a desperate war on England's side as predicted, but France's victory hadn't been so easily achieved. Eventually, despite their efforts they were still two separate reigns. And maybe that was for the best.

England bent down to kiss France's forehead, waiting for his lover to stir at the light touch and open his eyes only to stare sadly back at England.

"That was low, *Angleterre*," France accused him plainly, as if they were continuing a conversation they had started a long time ago. Still, England understood what his lover was talking about, acknowledging how badly he had behaved.

"I'm sorry."

"*Ma petite Jeanne*," France murmured, closing his eyes once again and inhaling deeply. "She was too young for that."

England simply held France close, hoping for some kind of forgiveness. The French nation welcomed the offer, burying his face in his lover's chest; one of England's hands found its way into his lover's soft and wavy hair, while the other rubbed his back, hoping to bring a bit of comfort to the suffering nation.

"Is alright, if I stay here with you?" England asked eventually, earning only a light nod from France, still buried deep into his embrace.

"Talk to me, France," He pleaded, then, unused to a quiet France.

"War is war and you're not your blasted king," France answered him, before staring back at him, his eyes sad but still pretty and alive as they had always been. "You showed to be quite the misogynist, though, you know? You're lucky I'm male, or I would have ripped your throat open."

Despite the threat, England chuckled at his lover's words.

"I admit it was unfair of me to laugh at her, but, considering the time we live in, she wasn't really something I expected. I thought you were joking by sending her out," He explained, daring to steal a light peck from France's lips. "She was a most honourable adversary, though."

"Not enough, since you eventually burned her like a witch."

"You still won the war," England protested. "*You* should be the one comforting *me*."

France's lips curled in a devious smirk.

"Oh, do you need to be comforted, *mon cher*?" He teased, licking his lips in anticipation.

“I came with a proposal,” England said instead, untangling from France to stand up and shake off the remains of grass from his clothes before offering France his hand to help him up. He waited for his lover to take his hand and stand up as well before continuing his speech. “Let’s have a date at mine before the next war begins. We’ve been at war one hundred years straight, I think we deserve a bit of leeway.”

“I’d love to see you tell your ambassadors that you will be stealing the French nation for a romantic stroll under the stars,” France deadpanned, making England groan in irritation at him.

“I’m serious, France.” England protested. “My court is already planning the next chance to be at war with you and I *know* yours is doing the same against us. Moreover, there’s really something I wanted to enjoy with you at least once, back at my place.”

“Are you ill or something? A surprise?” France asked, blushing lightly. He was certain he had heard wrong, because if there was one thing he understood about the love of his life was that he didn’t do romance, not even calling him with the endearing names France frequently used for him. “For me?”

“Of course, you idiot,” England complained, kissing him chastely on his lips nonetheless. “Will you come along?”

“As long as you’re not the one cooking dinner I’m certain I will come in many ways” France teased, grinning back at his lover.

“Why you?” England yelled back at him, as France began laughing freely. “Every time I try to plan something romantic for us you just keep ruining it!!”

“I’m just stating facts, my dear *Angleterre*,” France kept teasing, jumping backwards to dodge England’s fist. “Unnerved by the truth, my love?”

“I’ll show you love, you bloody frog!” England moved forwards to hit France once again, but France managed to dodge elegantly even that, before turning his back to England and run away, so that England just had to chase him around the meadows.

As he did his best to catch France and make him stop babbling nonsensically, England however could do nothing more than to admit to himself that no matter the outcome of their battles, the smile of a free France was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen.

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True to France’s teasing, the meeting during which England plainly told his ambassadors that the French nation would come back with them to the island was priceless. Even more so when the news was acknowledged with plain acceptance by the French court.

England really did not want to know what they'd had to suffer through by his lover's actions, though he could take an educated guess, knowing the Frenchman.

During the trip, France was a vision for England's eyes, still used to the instability that war and defeat brought with them. The Magna Charta apparently hadn't been enough to secure the kingdom, since England had apparently not considered rivalries among the elites and how a constant state of war would exasperate them. England had been the one supporting his king in his attempt to conquer France, and without a doubt he was all for bothering his lover and dominating him, but he hadn't expected one hundred years of continuous war. As a matter of fact, he was not even the one suggesting war as a tool to get France.

Thanks to the Normans' conquest, his royal family had claims to the French throne and if diplomacy didn't work, he could always enact his first plan of kidnapping his lover and ask his lands as ransom. He wasn't so naive to think to get through it without a fight, but one hundred years of war was something he had never wanted.

Now, however, because of his own desperation and his king's greediness he risked ending up as a casualty of a situation he had approved in the first place. He had approved it, it had gotten out of his hands and it had done nothing about France's situation.

On the contrary, a civil war was about to begin in England and, if he had to try surviving through it, he needed something good before everything derailed. He wanted France's smile to lighten up his day like the sun lit up the rich and fertile meadows of Provence. He wanted his deep blue eyes to look at him, calming his nerves like taking a swim in the Seine would. He wanted to hear what nonsense that arrogant nation could make up, one who had anything he wanted at his disposal.

He wanted France in his dominions, in his castle, in his bed, in his family.

Fuck him.

"Arthur, the sea is full of fish!" France called for England, pulling him out of his thoughts and anguish. "Don't you have something to catch them?"

"Why would you ever want to fish? We'll be at the castle before dinner," England complained, despite walking towards his lover, who was balancing precariously on the edge of the ship railing, apparently to have a better look at the fishes.

"I've got a theory," France told him abruptly, letting his feet finally land back on the wooden flooring as he turned to grin mischievously back at his lover, his index finger crooked in front of his lips and his thumb under his chin, like he was actually analysing his lover. "You lack good raw materials, otherwise is impossible you can't even cook the easiest meal."

"Do I need to point out that's unwise saying these things in a ship full of Englishman?" England groaned irritated, deciding against throttling his lover so soon into their first trip together after years of war.

"It's exactly because I'm conscious I'm surrounded that I'm calling you Arthur," France protested, pouting imploringly as he hid both his hands behind his back and bent over to

England to move him to pity. “C’mon, Arthur! *Ma soupe de poisson est très bonne!!*”

England rolled his eyes at the abuse of French hitting his ears.

“I can do a fish soup too, you know?” England countered, only to be answered by France dubious risen eyebrow.

“You git!!” He yelled back at the Frenchman, but instead of running away like always, France just straightened up and offered him a real kind smile.

“What’s the point in dating a Frenchman if you don’t eat our soup?” He told him, the tone of his voice mellow and suave, his eyes shining with something England could only identify as mischief. “I would feel offended if you refused me.”

England stared back crestfallen at the older nation for a few seconds too many, and then his shoulders just relaxed as his fists unclenched. He wasn’t going to win with France when speaking of cuisine, even less if the Frenchman planned to use his cooking skills to blatantly seduce him.

“We will catch your bloody fish,” England conceded in the end, allowing himself to blush slightly before turning towards a group of nearby crewmembers to order them to bring him a fishing cane and a bucket.

The sailors were quick to follow England's orders, and soon the island nation could see with his eyes how France wasn't just the land of agriculture. He was honestly quite skilled fishing, not just because he could easily fill a bucket in less than an hour, but also because of the load of notions he had dropped on England about fishing techniques, which canes and bait to use, which fish to use for different kind of dishes and so on. France was a bloody show off, but everything that had to do with eating really was his forte and England couldn’t do much more than just listen to his happy rambling.

Maybe, if he had listened to him properly, he would have improved his cooking skills like France kept telling him to do, yet the sound of his lover's voice was too distracting to waste his time focusing on his words. Bloody hell, he really was developing a kink for French and English with a French accent, and the fact that their languages shared quite a lot of vocabulary wasn't helping at all.

“*Tu comprends, mon amour?*” France rambled to a halt eventually.

“Hn?” England answered him, realising to have just been caught red handed.

“I know that I’m quite a sight, but you could still keep focused at least when I’m trying to explain to you which parts of the fish I caught are best to use. It’s your dinner we’re talking about,” France reprimanded him seductively, a smart and teasing smirk on his lips.

Only when he understood properly the meaning of France’s words did England realise that the Frenchman had stopped fishing to cut open the fish and clean it from its interiors. He had no time to enquire what he intended to do with it, however, when one of his lowest crewmember approached his lover with a small recipient and something that looked like salt.

“Mr. Francis, here’s what you’ve asked.”

“*Merci, mon ami,*” France answered the Englishman distractedly, not even noticing the panicked and worried expression of the English crewmember, who moved his stare quickly back to England as if to ask him what that meant.

“You may go,” England growled at him instead, making him run back to his other duties and, most likely, to ask for more information to the higher officers.

As England turned back to his lover, he noticed that he had stopped rambling and simply kept working on the fish, chopping it in tiny bites and then putting the chunks into the small bowl together with the salt. When he finished, France closed shut the container and presented it to England with a satisfied smile.

“This is for tonight,” He announced proudly. “And since you didn’t listen to a word I said, I guess it will count as a surprise~”

Hearing the word surprise made England actually remember what had been his intention at the beginning of it all.

“Speaking of surprises, tomorrow is Beltane,” He told the Frenchman, flushing scarlet as the embarrassment eat him alive. “The celebration goes on for the whole day with songs, dances and bonfires... I thought –I mean, I would like to ask you to, you know... Enjoy the festivity with me.”

“Beltane?” France repeated, blushing lightly himself at the strange request. “It’s a fertility ritual, isn’t it?”

“Be still my heart,” France continued, attempting to use humour to cover up his own happiness and embarrassment. “England is really asking me out for something that's like a holiday for lovers.”

“Don’t turn Beltane upside down, idiot,” England reprimanded him, more out of habit that because France hadn’t actually pin point the reason why he had invited France to the event. “This is just you sugar coating with love everything you touch. Beltane is not one of your patisseries.”

“Don’t insult me, Arthur, you know that Celtic blood runs through my veins too,” France protested, his nose up in challenge as he crossed his arms on his chest. “Beltane is the meeting of two halves that are meant to be with one another, or at least in close relations. Just like humans, Mother Earth and her creatures are also supposed to blossom and bear fruit.”

England looked at France, visibly surprised. He had indeed forgotten they were heavily related through their Celtic lineage.

“I thought you had forgotten everything after your conversion.”

France answered him with a cunning smile on his lips.

“Quite impossible to forget something that still runs through your veins, no matter the will of the court,” He explained haughtily, before adding in a more subdued tone of voice. “You should know all about it~”

“Of course I do,” England admitted, staring down at his feet. “I don't really like being told what to believe in.”

“Big news, everyone! We do share something, then,” France teased, chuckling at his lover.

“What’s your answer, France?” England asked eventually, licking his lips nervously and still not daring to look up at France. “You don’t need to stay through the midnight celebrations, if you feel uncomfortable about it.”

“I would like it, though. It's the first time you invited me to a date, no matter if it is in a secret and secluded area,” France answered, blushing even more as he too averted his eyes from England. “I’d like to celebrate a full Beltane with you.”

“Even if you’re converted?” England asked surprised, peeking up to survey France's reaction.

“Even if we’re nations?” France asked back, looking up at his lover with sad and discomfited eyes, making England’s heart breaking in his chest at the sight.

“We would really be quite the laughing stock of Europe, considering that we are always fighting one against the other,” England admitted, biting his lower lip. “I should have never proposed it.”

“Since when do the others care about what we’re up to?” France protested, putting his bowl of fish away and closing the gap between the two of them. “Let’s create some good memories of ourselves, *Angleterre*. Let's create something *good*.”

France cupped England’s chin and made him face him properly, so that he could press his lips on his lover’s in a soft kiss. It felt like ages had passed since the last time they had done it without the rush of the battle urging them just to take what they needed. It felt like ages since they could just share their love without the fear of being caught by someone and questioned on the matter. England groaned into the kiss, feeling the frustration rise up together with the desire to be closer to France and finally love him properly.

England took France in his arms to bring him even closer and then let his hands roam along his lover's sides. France’s breath hitched at the sensation and his hands left England’s chin to move on his shoulders and caress properly first his upper arms and then his back.

England decided that he had waited long enough, and eventually asked silently to deepen the kiss, bringing their bodies flushed against one another as his touches became a bit more daring. France allowed the intrusion and offered himself up to England's touches, attempting to give back as much as he received. To be free once again to simply enjoy the pleasure of each other’s company – and body - was wonderful and both of them allowed themselves to be swept away by their emotions.

It felt to them like only few minutes had passed, but it had certainly been much more, when one of the crewmembers interrupted their making out, approaching them with a shy “Mr. Kirkland, Mr. Bonnefoy, we’re approaching home- I mean, English shore.”

“Thank you,” England dismissed him quickly, without looking at him even when he had let go of France's tempting body. He grabbed his lover’s wrist, however, in order to lead him towards the ship’s bow and watch together the mainland approach.

“What a bother having other people around,” England told France, as he allowed the taller nation to drape himself over him.

“Englishmen are universally known to be a bother,” France teased, looking towards England to enjoy him groan in irritation.

“*Frenchmen* are universally known to be a bother. *Englishmen* are considered a bother only in France,” England protested, earning only a light chuckle from his lover.

“Looks like my cover slipped away, however. I wonder how you will explain the way you are consorting with the Universal Bother...” France took his chance to point out. “I thought Francis wasn’t much French as a name, it looks like that now even the lesser of your men discovered my surname... Now hiding the fact that I’m French will be impossible. Not that would really be possible, considering how my excessive French charm cannot be compared with your unrefined English one.”

England turned properly to his lover in order to glare back at him, despite still holding him close by the waist.

“Were you really hoping to hide the fact that you are French? You spoke to one of them in your own language!”

“I was just being polite,” France countered with faux innocence, grinning devilishly at him. “Was I supposed to use your disgraceful language?”

“You arrogant, bastard!” England yelled back at him in anger, lashing out against him.

France defended himself the best he could while laughing heartedly at England’s reaction. Eventually, they fell one over the other, France still laughing and England still punching him and swearing against the French nation.

“You’re too cute, England, I so love the face you make when you get angry,” France managed to say in between the fit of giggles that hadn't left him since the beginning of England's attempt at revenge.

“I know I landed a few good bows against you, how can you still be giggling?”

“They hurt quite a bit actually,” France admitted sincerely, his hand firm against his side. England suspected he was doing so more because he had actually hurt him than because of the fit of laughter, so he decided to stop. “It is still worth it.”

“You are quite the masochist, you know France?” England told him in plain discomfort. “One day someone will have your head for it.”

“Don’t worry,” France reassured him, bringing him to sit up along with him, so that he could face England properly and smirk seductively at him. “I promise I’ll be at my worst only with you~”

As England closed his eyes and leaned over to kiss France in a silent thank you, he let himself wonder if it was more worrisome that their relationship was built on mutual taunting or that he felt reassured that he would always be the top one on the receiving end of France’s provocations.

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**T.B.C.**

## Chapter End Notes

A/N: Keep in mind that Francis means Frenchman.

France's description of Beltane comes from the pagan tarots interpretation, where Beltane is actually associated with the Lovers.



# Beltane. 1454

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It didn't take them much to get to London and to the English court's castle.

Still, England had no time to lead France back to his apartments before he was called to his king's room; the fact that the servant had pointed out that the king had apparently just been informed about the presence of the French nation within the walls of his castle didn't give England hope for a positive outcome.

England quickly dragged France to his quarters and stormed out of them in full rage with the plain intention to tell his king to mind his own bloody business, since he was doing a deplorable job with it.

Left alone in the spartanly furnished room, France had quietly decided to move on with his plan and had disappeared inside the kitchens.

It was a quick job for the nation of courtly love to charm all the female staff and have their collaboration to surprise the love of his life; swooned away by the idea that a handsome young man would debase himself to cook for his lady – France had quietly let them assume whatever they wanted as long as he could get their collaboration – in no time they fetched him all he asked them and eventually left him alone to work his French magic.

As soon as the fish soup was ready, he got everything he needed to properly set the table and went back upstairs to create the perfect atmosphere. Even when they weren't at war against one another, it was almost impossible to convince England to have a proper date in public, therefore France had become an expert in arranging indoor dates.

After everything was prepared in the best way to please his lover, he went back to retrieve the food. Cooks, maidens and the rest of the kitchen staff had desperately offered themselves to help him bringing it upstairs, but, with the romantic tale of a secret forbidden love, he had managed to get them to stop insisting. It wasn't completely a lie, to be fair, but he still had excessively abused the worst possible clichés of the [Occitan lyric poetry](#) to achieve his intent.

That had probably made them think that France was a French troubadour guest of the court, but in their defence there weren't many other ways to justify the presence of a courteous Frenchman inside the castle.

Eventually, France had successfully managed to have everything ready for his surprise dinner and to free himself of the kitchen staff, who were literally dying to hear more of France's tales. France was just glad that he had good memory, since the apex of his courtly love lyrics dated back to the XII century.

Once everything was ready, he only had himself to doll up nicely. He changed into one of those loose and finely embroidered tunics that usually left England gaping at him – not that the

proud island nation would ever admit it – and tied up the upper part of his long wavy hair with a pale blue ribbon. As he wondered what he could add next, England busted open the door of his room in a fit of rage.

“How dares he try to command me!?” England yelled so loudly that his words probably echoed through the whole castle. “He should try to control his own relatives instead of putting his nose where it doesn’t belong, for God’s s-”

England yells stopped dead in his throat as he took in the romantic scenery his lover had arranged.

“And here I wonder sometimes why you’re worth all I have to endure because of you,” England said instead, his anger deflating.

France laughed at his lover and gracefully rushed towards him to welcome him by the door, eventually taking his chance to show off his flowing attire with a perfect pirouette.

“Isn’t this the most romantic scene you’ve ever witnessed?” France asked smugly. “Your gorgeous lover waiting home for you with a nice dinner already set on the table, and both ready to be eaten up...”

England took his time to admire the way France’s tunic and hair fell back into place and swallowed deeply.

“You should stop dressing like a girl,” England found himself pointing out, despite his better judgement.

“This is proper male clothing, including the hairdo,” France protested, a challenging and proud smirk growing on his lips as he noticed England’s reaction. “You always had prejudices about my fashion, but you really can’t deny that you like it~”

And England really couldn’t, ever since he had been just a child; France looked gorgeous and just enough ambiguous to make England’s mind spin and they both knew it, so it was simply obvious for France to play all the cards in his hand to have the English nation at his mercy.

The last arrow in his French quiver, however, was just about to be shot. France took England’s hand in his and led him towards the table, taking care to close the door behind his lover’s back. He made him take a seat and then uncovered the pot’s lid, letting the delicious smell fill the room.

He filled both plates and then sat in front of his lover, smiling adoringly at him.

“Well, dear, tell me all about it.” He asked gently. “I guess your king wasn’t happy to know how you have been consorting with your dreaded enemy.”

England needed a moment to even remember why he had been annoyed at his king.

“Partially,” England admitted eventually, staring down at the food on his plate and swirling the spoon inside it just to have the chance to not look France straight in the eyes. “He seemed more annoyed that I was snogging the *male* French nation than the *French nation* himself.”

“Why are your ruler and high bishops always so boring?” France asked, annoyed, elegantly filling his spoon before bringing it to his lips. “*Bon appétit~*”

“Bon appetite, France,” England answered quietly, starting on his soup. Much to his dismay, he could do nothing except admit it was delicious.... And very French. “How did you managed to get the cooks to allow you to use the kitchen?”

“*Amour Courtois, mon cher,*” France explained shamelessly. “Old, but still effective in England, it seems.”

England groaned his disappointment at France’s words.

“Please, stop messing with my history and literature...” He groaned, glaring back at his lover. “Last time it was Tristan and Isolde, and before that the whole king Arthur series. I thought about changing my human name out of *desperation*.”

France chuckled lightly and kept eating as if he had been actually innocent in all that.

“I think I’ve been kind enough, I spared you everything involving homosociality,” France countered dramatically. “I so hoped Godefroi de Leigni would set a trend...”

“In my opinion, the trend he wanted to set was inside Chrétien de Troyes’ pants... Or under his tunic, considering they were French... More or less.” England bit back, finishing the last of his soup. “Blasted men, you are.”

“We sing Arthurian tales best, *mon cher*, just admit it,” France chided merrily, smirking back at his lover. “Seconds?”

England put aside his thoughts about French literature to focus back on his own Frenchman: he had managed not to voice his thoughts about the food, but asking for seconds would count as a compliment to the narcissistic French nation...

Eventually, he just sighed and offered his plate to his lover for a refill.

“Thanks, France,” England muttered reluctantly as his lover took it in his hands grinning madly and, doing so, letting the island nation know that he had taken it as a compliment as expected.

“I’m glad you liked it,” France admitted, giving him back the plate. “It’s nice to have a romantic dinner, once in a while.”

England nodded and began eating so not to let out a deep sigh of frustration. If he was stronger and could annex France, they could live in the same house without any king or nation telling them it wasn’t proper. Still, he had to wonder what would be left of France without his freedom.

He had thought about what their life would be if France had managed to annex England, something that considering the recent outcomes of their wars wasn’t just a far-away hypothesis, but his thoughts hadn’t progressed much further than anticipating the ache for his own eventual loss of freedom.

Maybe this long distance relationship really was the best they could get, as nations, if they honestly valued their partner.

When they finished eating, England helped France gather back all the things he had borrowed from the kitchens, but the French nation refused to allow him to help bring them back or to call a servant. Apparently, he wanted to maintain the aura of mystery around him that he had created among the kitchen staff and, considering that his lover had to eat an English meal at some point, England agreed that he'd better let him do as he pleased; the last thing he wanted was to assist to a play-pretend death by food poisoning.

He waited for France to finish his errands to the kitchens while laying down on his bed and simply staring up at nothing in particular, lost in thought. He felt unusually warm, even more so as he pictured in his mind France twirling around his own room like one of his fairies. That was one of the many things that were unnerving, unsettling and astonishing about his lover: how he could be at the same time a fairy, an egotistical bastard and also a deadly soldier. He had been on the receiving end of France's blasts, and he couldn't deny he was skilled when it came to war. No matter if he kept saying that all the same, it was just to annoy France and they both knew it.

"Honey, I'm home~" France chanted eventually, returning from his last trip. "Did you miss me?"

Without waiting for a reply, he walked towards England and then laid down over him.

"*Bonsoir*~" He teased, already licking his lips in anticipation.

"Quite a lot, actually," England answered matter-of-factly, earning a surprised lifted eyebrow from France.

"Are you all right, England?" France asked, sincerely worried by his lover's honest declaration.

England took a firm grip of France's upper arms and rolled them over, trapping his lover under him. He brushed their lips together as he pressed his body hard against France's.

"You tell me," England countered, noticing France's eyes glistening slyly as his lips morphed into an evil smirk. "I could fuck you into the mattress the whole night."

"Now now," France drawled, rising his hands in surrender. "Those were just a few spices well chosen to get the desired result, and mostly regarding taste."

"You're a vixen," England growled, as he proceeded to devour France's neck with bites and kisses, his hands grasping tightly his hips to press their groins together. "Trust a Frenchman to not pervert even a fish soup..."

"You're just lacking resistance because you're not used to eat properly," France moaned back, arching his body to get more of his English lover as his hands found their way on England's back. "And I'm certain you're quite aware than I'm more fox than vixen..."

“One could wonder-” England countered, only to be silenced by France’s firm lips on his.

They fumbled with one another's clothes to get the other naked as quickly as possible and finally moved forward to the well-desired skin-to-skin contact. Their hands explored and teased every bit of skin they could reach, remembering the familiar muscles and swells of their partner’s body and discovering the new scars they had inflicted to one another.

Eventually, hands weren’t enough anymore and England moved his lips away from France’s to get a taste of his lover’s skin. He kissed, licked and nibbled his slightly hairy chest and then moved to savour his pink nipples that were already up and hard.

France answered his ministrations with strangled moans that made England's cock harden; as naked as he was, he certainly couldn't say that his lover was anything but male. The strong shoulders, the hairy chest, the narrow hips, the quite visible muscles of his legs and arms... was it really so wrong to like all that? Would it disappear, eventually, like his desire to grow out his hair? He still liked long hair, though... on France. And even that first time he had wanted to grow his hair because of the bloody Frenchman.

England moved back up to thread his fingers through France's wavy hair, and shuddered at how soft they felt. France looked up at him, not understanding his intentions, but England just smiled back at him and kissed him like a starved man.

When he felt once again France pliant under his touch, he resumed his lazy exploration of France's body, taking his time to trace his well definite abdomen.

“England...” France moaned, burying his hands into his lover’s hair as England teased a particular scar that he didn’t recognize right above France’s hips.

“Now I’m jealous,” England told France, glaring up at him in fake disappointment as he licked carefully the light swell of the unknown scar. “Here I am at my weakest and I discover you had time to fight with someone else while we were at war. How arrogant of me to presume I'm your biggest enemy...”

France let out a sound halfway between a moan and a snort, rising his right leg over his shoulders so that he could hit England’s back with his heel.

“Only with myself,” France countered, annoyed, as England took his chance to move France’s left leg over his shoulder as well, in order to give his whole attention to his lover’s already leaking member.

After a few explorative licks, he took France’s hard member in his mouth, starting to blow his lover’s mind with slow and perfectly calibrated movements. Whatever else France wanted to say about the scar disappeared into a stream of profanities in French that England was too distracted to even try to understand.

France’s hands eventually found their way back into England’s hair and he desperately attempted to pull his lover back up. England however, wasn’t of the same mind and made it as hard as he could for France to pull him away.

“Give up, France,” England ordered France eventually, his lips only few inches from France’s cock.

France cried out at the sensation and thrust upwards unconsciously, England’s tongue ready to meet his cock halfway and torment him further. France’s moans and stream of broken French now mingled with the constant tugs on his hair, now attempting to keep him down between his legs.

It was too much for the English nation, who couldn’t certainly deny being a bit of a masochist himself under his thick layers of sadism. Eventually, he took himself in hand and began stroking in time with his own bobbing.

The sensation of his erection finally being taken care of made him moan around the hard dick he was worshipping, making France even more undone and consequently turning England on even more.

It soon became too much for both of them and they came one after the other, France into England’s greedy mouth and England over his own sheets.

Hands and arms still shaking, France finally managed to tug England back up to eye level with him. England, exhausted, let his lover guide him up and quietly curled at France’s side. The French nation simply stared hazily at his half-asleep lover, attempting to catch his breath.

“England?” He moaned eventually, earning a tired stare on him only after a while. As soon as he had England’s attention, France cupped his chin adoringly, and brought their lips together into a searing kiss.

“*Je t’aime*,” France whispered to him, rising a nicely trimmed eyebrow at his lover when his words earned him only a soft chuckle.

“So, what do you think about it? Can I say that I speak French too?”

France needed more than just a while to properly put everything together and understand the only thing his lover could mean.

“Who would use *speaking French* as synonym for sucking a dick?” France whined, pouting miserably even if he still hadn’t decided whether he had to take it as an insult or a compliment.

“Well, I can say for experience that you speak French as if it was your mother language,” England kept teasing. “At least, it’s about an actual dick and not about you being one.”

France simply stared back at his lover with a blank expression on his face, making England laugh even more. Being able to steal a bitter remark from the French nation was an unexpected success.

“Have a chat with your Italian little brothers, France. We’re not the only ones using French to address something foul...”

“In my experience, English usually gives my language quite the *sexual* connotation,” France took his only chance to counter, smirking back tightly at England in a desperate attempt to save his pride.

“I’m guilty as charged,” England admitted, however, tightening his grip around France. “I’ve got plenty of experience with your dick. Also with you being a dick, if you pardon *my* French.”

“You little—” France yelled back at his lover, pinching his skin wherever he could reach. England attempted to give back as much as he got and eventually they both ended up in peals of laughers.

“I love you,” England told France amidst the fight, bringing to a halt the friendly assault.

“*Je t’aime aussi, Angleterre,*” France answered back, putting his arms around England’s neck to bring him down into a last passionate kiss before both of them fell asleep.

---

The next day, England couldn’t wait to finally go outside the castle and amongst the citizen that were living in the furthest rural areas of his land.

There would be no problem with France being with him out there except the fact that, well, it was France they were talking about, and for him insulting people without even noticing it – or noticing it too well – was a second nature.

Still, the holiday spirit was contagious, especially for France who hadn’t see a Beltane celebration since he was a child. The strongest men, helped by some children, were busy preparing the wood for the bonfire to be lightened up in the evening. Most of the women were instead busy making sweets and many different kind of food, both for the villagers and their deities. A group of young girls, farther on, was decorating with colourful ribbons and flowers the area up the hill, where the celebration was going to be held. The animals were also dressed up for the occasion, adorned with ribbons and flowers themselves by the creative hands of the smallest children. The biggest and fattest sheep, that had to be sacrificed onto the bonfire, was kept under the care of the oldest man of the village.

A group of wandering musicians was resting under a big tree, taking care of their instruments and playing some merry music for the joy of the working villagers, who thanked them with food and presents in exchange for their presence at the festival.

France’s eyes were large in wonder, there were too many things to see and too little time to give to it all the attention it deserved. It was like dealing with a child, something that kept surprising England, considering that France was older, even though secretly he had hoped to get this reaction from him.

Sometimes, England felt like he was leaving France behind, or maybe he had just lost too many times to the blond, charming menace, and now he was beginning to feel inadequate. Maybe that was why he hadn't really done much to change his king's mind about killing Jeanne d'Arc, because he couldn't understand how France could rely on her. Who could England rely upon?

"Arthur, can we go to watch the preparations of the bonfire?" France called England back from his thoughts. "Will they let us help, if we ask?"

"Are you sure you have already decided where you want to put your hands on?" England teased, walking quietly behind his lover. "Most of these things are your forte."

"You're right," France admitted quietly, turning suddenly and unexpectedly serious. "Why is it, England? Am I not a Christian country?"

"Technically, I'm Christian too," England told him, embracing France from behind as both of them stared at the growing pile of wood that would become the bonfire on the top of the hill. "Despite that, I'm here. As long as there is magic in my country, here is the place I belong to."

"There's no more magic in mine," France countered sadly. "It hurts losing part of your heritage, especially when it has shaped you into what you are."

England let his chin drop on France's shoulder and sighed softly.

"When your people will forget entirely, it will stop hurting, France. You know how it is for people like us."

England felt France wince in his embrace and soon his lover turned to stare terrified at him.

"I don't want to," He pleaded, two small tears rolling down his pale cheeks. "England, please, stop this!"

England could just tighten his arms around France to attempt bringing him some kind of comfort, painfully aware that no nation could avoid their destiny.

"There will always be magic in mine. I will protect yours hiding it inside mine, if you trust me."

"England..." France pleaded, closing his eyes as he waited for the inevitable to come.

England swallowed and then placed his lips chastely over his lover's, allowing the last faint traces of France's magic to merge with his own. His lover had never owned much magic, proof was that he had stopped seeing fairies as soon as he had begun standing up properly on his own two legs. Still, it hurt having to take away from him the last remains of it, no matter if France would barely acknowledge it.

"How are you feeling, France?" England asked as soon as he interrupted the kiss. His heart broke, however, noticing how France began to openly cry as soon as he had opened his eyes.



“It hurts, *Angleterre*.” France admitted, attempting to offer England a small smile despite his pain.

“I’ll take good care of it, I promise.” England swore to him, getting closer to hold him tight in his arms. “Even if you will soon forget everything, your magic will still exist. Now stop, love. Please.”

“I’ll stop crying, all right,” France countered attempting to offer his lover a strained chuckle. He freed himself from England’s embrace and took his handkerchief to blow his nose.

“I meant to say—” England protested, resting his hand caringly on France’s wet cheek. “Stop pretending that you are fine.”

France’s eyes grew larger in surprise and then he finally offered England a much more honest smile. “It’s really hard to remember my problems when I’m with you.”

England chuckled at France’s words and kissed him gently on his lips. As long as they didn’t have sex during the apex of the Beltane celebrations, after all, everything would turn out for the best.

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England woke up the following morning with a pounding headache.

France, being France, had eventually found out the only Calvados apple cider present in the whole of England and contributed distilling it into a honey coloured liquor. His starting idea was to show off to whoever was willing to listen how to use it in the preparations of sorbets and patisserie, but it had gone spare by simply drinking it undiluted, most of it by the very same Frenchman. Since it essentially tasted like apple brandy, England had gladly abused of the liquor as well.

Despite the sweets and the food offered to whoever joined the festival, the alcohol went straight to their head and the rhythmical sound of the songs and musical instruments quickly lead them to an altered state of confusion.

England sat up with some difficulties and noticed that he had been sleeping under a big colourfully decorated tree. He had a blanket on him, courtesy of the villagers when at a certain point they had noticed their nation about to pass out; their nation and the French one, since he could feel the heat of France’s body right next to him.

As he attempted to open his eyes properly, three or four pixies rushed in front of him, yelling something that he wasn’t able to comprehend at all, since they were all shrieking at the same time.

“I can’t understand a single word of what you’re saying,” England told them slowly and quietly, hoping not to worsen the drumming in his head.

One of his friends, taking pity on him, moved away from the group to land gracefully on the tip of his nose. Without saying a single word, she just pointed at his side before crossing disappointedly her arms on her chest.

As England followed the pixie's directions, he finally noticed that both he and France were completely naked.

"Oh, God... Not during Beltane..." England moaned, both in pain and desperation.

After checking that the whole village was still fast asleep in the dim light of dawn, he laid back once again at France's side, hoping to reconstruct the dynamics of whatever they had done the previous evening.

He scooped his lover in his arms and kept him relaxed with kind caresses that nonchalantly moved lower. Before he could actually check between France's butt cheeks, the Frenchman pushed him roughly on his back, towering over him as he sat on England's thighs.

"I want more," France moaned, still extremely sleepy and utterly hangover.

"France, wait--"

England was promptly shut up by his lover, who let his tongue slip in his mouth without any further notice. As France slightly humped his thigh, a thick liquid dribbled from inside him, drenching his lover's skin. The wetness made England realise that the night before he had actually fucked his lover, and it also made him wonder what the hell they had used as lube, since all that couldn't possibly be any of the oils they usually used and much less his own sperm.

Those fleeting thoughts, and also the pixies screams, however, fell into background noises as France kept rubbing against him, teasing, licking and kissing everything of him. The Frenchman let out a surprised whimper as the tip of his cock eventually hit England's chest, making all his muscles tingle. They shared a quick meaningful glance and soon France straddled England as he got ready for his lover to lower himself on his already hard shaft.

France groaned at the intrusion, but apparently despite his altered state England had managed to stretch him properly the night before, so everything was nothing more than the usual little discomfort that turned into burning pleasure as soon as he began moving. To England, it was a vision –admiring France's barely focused eyes, his thin eyebrows knitted in deep concentration, the mouth that could say so many obscenities and insults now opened just enough to allow him to inhale and exhale deeply or to let out a soft moan at the best.

"F-France" England moaned, as he began thrusting up, attempting to meet his lover's thrusts and match the tempo that France was setting for himself.

France let his head bend backwards, his wavy hair shaking like the wheat in the wind.

It didn't take much for England to come inside France once again, the feeling of France's orgasm sending him over the edge too.

He couldn't ask more to his lover, though, since France fell deeply asleep once again as soon he had let himself drop over England. He unconsciously curled around the slightly smaller frame of his lover and England was all too glad to hold him close just as unconsciously.

Eventually, despite the pixies protests, England fell asleep along with his lover, both completely drained of all his energy.

After all, magic was stronger during Beltane.

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**T.B.C.**

## Chapter End Notes

A/N: Godefroi de Leigni lived probably in current Belgium, but back then he could be considered as French as Chrétien de Troyes, whose works he continued.

It is difficult reconstructing how Beltane was at its origin, and it is even worse guessing what was left of that in the XV century after centuries of persecutions. I guess, however, that it reflected more or less what was and is common during these kind of rituals all over the world.

# A family in North America

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The following week another group of ambassadors had to return to France to settle one of the many disputes that kept rising between the two nations, therefore France took his chance to go back home, much to the relief of his lover, who was already fretting about what was going to happen in his own country.

In a matter of years, England ended up devastated by the war of the two roses, a stupid war whose only positive outcome was that it brought the end of two stupid dynasties –at least in England’s opinion. After that, war against France resumed in many different –and creative– ways during the Italian wars, occasion in which England even managed to finally best his archenemy and lover. The victory was never definitive, though, something that made England lose a bit of interest in war as he knew it.

In the meanwhile, English explorers landed on the northern side of what would be called the New World. Too busy with their catfight, however, nor France nor England put much thought into it.

When later on some French explorers also landed on the same side of that land, however, a new chance for them became possible. While their kings and armies were busy fighting one against the other, they both rushed to the New World, pretending to be there just to bother their rival, but mostly simply to enjoy their time together surrounded by untamed nature.

It was during that blissful period that they were reached by Finland, unsettled about Netherland’s expansion in the northern part of the new continent. The worried nation had unfortunately taken this chance to talk to them also about a child he had found there.

France and England had followed Finland and met the child, only ending up fighting more amongst themselves rather than do something about that new baby nation. Attempting to treat him as their younger brother was going to turn out to be just another chance to get to each other’s nerves and another excuse to bicker... or at least, this was what England had planned at the beginning, a resolution that began to crack in less than 12 hours. That very first night as he laid awake in his bed holding tight a deeply asleep France against himself, he couldn't stop thinking about what the hell had happened that day.

He and France had been joking when they had pointed out the similarities between themselves and the child, but what they had said was honestly and painfully true nonetheless.

The child really looked like them, no matter from which side they looked at him.

He had France’s neatly shaped eyebrows and his eyes were only a few shades clearer than his lover’s. He had England’s nose, his lips. The child's hair looked a bit like England's in colour and straightness, but it didn't just stick out in different places on their own volition, rather it was easy to tame like France’s.

England had a hunch about what had happened and the only thing he could think about at the moment was how to prevent France from finding out. How to spare himself the hardship of explaining to him how he had more or less willingly put France in a risky situation without even explaining to him the details and possible outcomes. How to prevent more of his lover to show upon the small boy they had just discovered.

England's determination eventually sent he and France back into the longest series of wars they could imagine, a fight that for unknown reasons France took to heart almost as much as he did.

Not even getting the upper hand in conflicts between them and taking as many lands as possible was enough anymore. Those had been only sad, small victories for England, completely conscious that he was intentionally working against his lover of 400 years and best friend of a lifetime. Moreover, nothing was ever definitive, not even when he basically brought America to live in his house.

Despite having his momentary custody, however, England's attention couldn't solely focus on little America: he was building an empire and his ambiguous relationship with France, made of colonial disputes and sex, still filled up the majority of his schedule.

Attempting to finally solve the problem of America's custody once and for all, England had even turned to piracy, becoming a nightmare to his lover and the other colonial empires. He and France obviously kept seeing one another, but England's feelings of guilt prevented him from having any kind of serious conversation with France, be it personal or diplomatic. He felt divided in two, conflicted about the need to get closer to his lover and share with him their secret, and get as far as he could from him and any reminder of his lies.

That was why, when one day he went back to check on America – and properly corrupt him with the most English thing he could concoct – he didn't really imagine finding there someone else waiting to meet him.

He had just given America a handmade set of wooden toy soldiers that the boy had deeply loved and he was still enjoying his happy cries of joy, sitting in front of him on the cold floor, when France simply opened the door to his house and appeared on the threshold. Another child, about the same age as America, was holding his hand tightly.

England's heart sank in his chest seeing the resemblances between the other child nation and America, even more so when he noticed the darker shade of eyes and his well cared and wavy hair, precisely identical to France's.

*"Bonjour, mon cher,"* France greeted him, walking quietly inside the house without even waiting for England's invite.

Now that he could see his lover properly without the shades that the shining sun dropped on his figure, England could finally notice how he was still dressed in his light blue pirate uniform. It fit him perfectly, and the big feathery hat on his head made him look like the strong Empire he represented.

He still hated this about the love of his life. Their pirate attires weren't much different aside for the colour, yet the impression they offered was of two opposites. France, with his long hair tightened up with a gracious light blue ribbon and his perfect figure gave the impression of a refined noble joining the skirmishes all over the seven seas out of boredom. England, with his spiky hair, thin constitution and his aptitude for quick anger and violence looked like a punk thirsty for blood. Maybe this was because deep inside this was exactly who they were.

"France..." England barely managed to whisper, his eyes looking up at his lover with all the insecurity he was feeling.

"We do really need to talk, we can't keep going on like this," France told him as gently as he could. "And I'm not talking about the wars."

"I don't want to," England whined, curling on himself and hiding his head behind his knees. "I *can't*..."

France sighed dramatically and shook his head in disapproval.

"Say hello to Canada at least. I don't think he needs an introduction, does he?"

England peeked tentatively from above his knees and saw the small child staring confused back at him. The sight warmed his heart and he uncurled just enough to offer him a big smile.

"Hello, Canada. I'm England."

Canada just blinked twice and hid his face behind the big polar bear he was holding in his arms.

Both England and France smiled at the child's behaviour, but they had no chance to say anything to him before he was pulled into a tight hug by America, who had been staring at the whole scene without understanding much of it.

"I just got these new toys, brother!" America basically screamed at him, smiling happily at him as he showed his new toys. "Wanna play together?"

Canada stared down at the wooden soldier in red uniform and his eyes shone bright in pure delight.

"*Oui!*" He answered in a soft whisper, nodding enthusiastically.

In no time, America kidnapped his brother to play together in his room, leaving both parents to stare as they ran upstairs while they both laughed happily.

"I would have never thought that America would recognize his brother straight away," France pointed out eventually, smirking at the scene in satisfaction.

"You—" England attempted to say, despite the tears threatening to fall and the lump in his throat preventing him to speak clearly. "Have you tried to hide Canada from me?"

France turned quickly to stare back at his lover and snorted, deeply offended by England's suppositions.

"I'm not you, *mon cher*," He retorted coldly. "I found him hidden away some time after you basically kidnapped America, hiding him in your own house. It was when I found him that everything I couldn't understand about America became clear."

"He speaks French—"

"He speaks both. He had apparently been stalking us since before we even met America, so he learned from the both of us."

England nodded, deciding that his lover was indeed making sense, and then swallowed hard. "Do you hate me?" He asked eventually.

"I—" France began, wondering what he could say so not to sound too harsh to the nation with whom he just wanted to make peace. "I just can't understand *why*."

"I was scared," England admitted, hiding his head once again between his knees. France sat down beside him and held him tight against himself, hoping to get more out of his lover.

"I *am* scared," England continued. "To lose you, to lose him— them, actually. I would have never guessed they were two."

"I'm here," France told him kindly, before he chuckled, hoping to lighten the mood. "To bother you, but I'm here."

England chuckled back at France's words, but still kept his face hidden behind his knees, even when he leaned more against France.

"And so are they," France continued more seriously. "Care to tell me how were we granted such cute children of our own blood?"

"Beltane is a fertility ritual first and foremost," England explained quietly. "I inadvertently must have fed it with my magic."

"So... They were alone here since before the war of the two roses..." France realised in shock, his eyes back on England searching for confirmation, even though his lover still didn't look up at him. "It's a horrible kind of magic. Did you know this would happen?"

"It was a possibility, but something like one in a million," England admitted. "Maybe, since we are deeply related and I had just gotten your magic, for us the chances were higher than that.... I didn't really think much about it myself. Still, I would have never guessed two children would come out of two attempts. This is plainly unheard of."

"They are really cute though, I don't mind having them, no matter if I wasn't completely aware of what we were doing at the time," France attempted to cheer England up. "Still, this doesn't explain why you were hiding all this."

“We’re nations... *They* are nations.” England tried to explain. “I want to have them forever in my house, even if it means they will still be children like they are now.”

“Children eventually grow up and leave, England” France pointed out. “Even for humans it works like this.”

“I don’t want to, they are mine!” England yelled eventually. “They are the only piece of my family that I can *keep* in my house!”

“England... You can call me over whenever you want and my home is always open for you, even when we’re at war...”

“It’s not the same!” England yelled back at him, now crying freely. “I want you to be there for me when I get home, greet me with that stupid French of yours and tell me that you cooked because I’m shit at it!”

France chuckled sadly at his lover’s words. “It’s endearing that I manage to insult you even in your daydreams.”

England allowed himself to chuckle lightly and shuffled closer into France’s embrace, burying his nose in his lover's chest.

“I thought I had lost you forever when I discovered that I trapped you in this relationship,” England admitted, grasping tightly his lover's jacket. “I didn't know how to tell you and how you would react.”

“You *were* about to lose me, but because I was getting annoyed at you sinking my ships,” France pretended to protest, despite closing his arms tightly around his lover. “You are a nasty pirate, captain Kirkland.”

“I sank your ships to have an excuse to board you on mine,” England admitted, prompting France to kiss his forehead with love.

“It can’t be every day, but I can come to your house more,” France offered, attempting to meet his lover halfway. “Still the children are nations, *mon amour*, they must grow up and when it happens... You know that if you don’t want to let them go you will have to *kill* them.”

England shuddered at France’s words, realising how true they were.

“Together we will survive even this one, *Angleterre*,” France offered, perceiving England's worry.

“Will we really?” England asked, his fingers playing with the shining buttons of France's uniform. “Can I keep Canada?” He added as an afterthought, then, earning a shocked chuckle from his lover.

“My my... greedy, are we?”

“I'll get him from you through war, if that's necessary,” England insisted, despite cuddling closer to his lover. “C'mon, I'll be a good Lord.”



That said he bit down on France's neck, attempting to turn his lover putty in his hands. France wasn't the only one who had learned how to play his lover, so he easily succeeded.

"War will be, *bon sang*... I'm their father too, you know?" France protested, attempting to fight back with the last bit of self-control he had but to no avail.

England laid his lover on the wooden floor of his house and placed himself between his legs, finally staring back at France.

"Mother," England corrected, a devious expression on his childish face.

"What?" France asked, staring up at his lover completely missing England's point.

"You are their mother. I am the one who fucked you during Beltane~"

"If we use topping and bottoming as rules, the figures are in my favour," France protested weakly, his voice turning into soft mewls as England moved his searching hand to France's swelling groin.

"Who cares about the figures, you bottomed *then*," England reasoned, letting go of his lover's groin in order to unbutton France's jacket and then his ruffled shirt.

His lips latched to his neck once again and he took his time to kiss and lick him there as much as he could before moving lower to bite and tease his lover's hardened nipples.

"Besides," England continued between kisses and light bites. "You are girlish, you cross-dress on a whim and you have the patience to be the carer. I'm more for scolding, unless someone is injured."

"You say all these things and still you want to take away Canada from me," France protested, even when he tightened his knees around his lover's waist, urging England to keep going what his mouth was doing.

"You *will* have to come here more often if I have your children in my house," England explained matter-of-factly, taking his chance to look up and grin smartly at his lover, who could just stare back in shock at him, attempting to catch his breath.

"You're evil, *Angleterre*..." France countered, his voice barely a whisper.

"It's the only way for me to survive this, France," England admitted sadly, his hand caressing gently France's cheek.

"We'll survive it together, *mon cher*, no matter in which house the children will live," France promised, placing his hand over England's. "We won't be apart, I promise you."

England swallowed hard and leaned over France to kiss him lovingly on his lips. France quietly answered back, allowing their lips to brush against one another's as he put his arms around England's neck and brought him down over him. England complied but didn't deepen the kiss, hoping to make France realise that it wasn't just his body he wanted, no matter how much he desired him.

Eventually they parted and England could do nothing more than stare into his lover's deep blue eyes.

"I hope you are right, France," England answered him, his lips searching once again France's for another fleeting kiss. "I really wouldn't survive it if we didn't."

That said, he took once again France into a searing kiss that he soon deepened, as his hand roamed all over his lover's body. France let England do as he pleased while he started stripping him of his own clothes with a fervency he could barely contain.

"Take me, Angleterre," France eventually whispered in his lover's ear, guiding England once again against him. "You still can, so please do it."

England disentangled from France just enough to look at him, his shocked stare meeting France's reassuring one.

"War won't make me love you less, but neither will treachery. Not this kind of treachery, at least," France explained with a smart smirk. "I still trust you, you idiot, stop fretting."

"Fuck you, France, I hate you," England countered as he punched France's bare chest and hid his face there, trying to not cry.

France just laughed quietly at his lover's reaction, ruffling his hair affectionately.

"I love you too, *mon cher*," he sighed, smiling up at the ceiling as England started once again to kiss his chest and lower, making him finally feel England one hundred percent with him after years of incomprehension between them. "I really do."

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Some days England fought against France in whichever Succession war Europe fell in, other days he went back to his country attempting to perfect his initial plan of getting a stronger Monarchy through the proclamation of the Bill of Rights; some other days he went back to the New world to bring a new toy to America and found him there waiting for him, and other days he would go back to an empty home only to read on a quickly scribbled note that America had gone playing with Canada.

Some days, however, he would actually get what he had longed for all those years.

"I'm back!" England announced entering the mansion he owned in the new world, not really sure what and who he would find inside.

His ears were soon greeted by the sound of children laughing happily.

"*Content de te revoir, mon cher*," France welcomed him home from the carpet in front of the fireplace he was sitting on, as he freed the two children from his arms and set the book he was reading to them aside.

“Welcome back home, England!!” Both America and Canada said in unison, rushing towards him to get a hug.

England felt a bit uneasy seeing how they could already hold him by his hips, their faces buried against his belly. He attempted to relax nonetheless and held them back before ruffling their hair affectionately.

“Were you guys having fun?” He asked the children with a big adoring smile.

“We helped France cooking dinner!” America announced over cheerfully, only to be glared at by his brother.

“You didn’t, France made you read a story out loud just to keep you busy!” Canada protested quietly, his small pout the only sign that gave away how much he was annoyed at America.

“Noise in the kitchen is needed with dinner, isn’t it France?” America screamed back at his twin, though, turning with determination towards France, who just stood up from his position in front of the fireplace and smiled awkwardly at him.

“Of course, my dear,” He offered meekly, much to Canada’s irritation.

“You see?” America proudly yelled in his brother’s face. “I helped!”

Canada just grimaced and pouted a last time to America, turning with disdain his head to his side in an offended manner. France chuckled at the scene and reached the rest of his family to place a caring hand on both his children’s heads.

“And *maman* France is proud of you,” He told America kindly, before turning to wink at Canada, who stared surprised up at him. “To each their own, isn’t it?”

Canada smiled back at France, reassured by his words, and nodded briefly at him before turning once again towards England.

“Then France read us stories, it was fun!”

“Oh, really?” England asked Canada in mock surprise before turning to his lover. “Do I need to worry?”

“Cultural dominion is my forte, *mon cher*, you will never know,” France countered challengingly, offering him a wink before turning to walk towards the kitchen. “Dinner is ready, however. You will have to discover it later, I offer myself for a full body inspection~”

England rolled his eyes at France's teasing, glad that the children were still too young to understand what their French father meant.

As if to prove England's point the children left his side quickly to rush after France, seemingly to help him set the table. With nonchalance, then, he approached the fireplace in order to have a look at the book France had been reading to the children. Deeming it safe enough, he joined his family at the dinner table.

“The tragedy of Zara, France?” England asked as he set the book on one of the kitchen counters. “Isn’t it a bit for adults?”

“Says the nation who plays *Zaïre* in his theatres as much as I do since 1735,” France mocked him elegantly as he started cutting the loaf of meat he had just taken out the casserole in front of England’s confused stare.

“What did you cook?” He asked, staring suspiciously at France’s preparation, definitively too well-refined for a simple family dinner.

“*Filet d’aloyau braisé à la royale*,” France answered, an evil grin finding its way on his lips as he moved the meat he had cut up in slices from the chopping board to their plates. Before placing them in front of each member of the family, he added some of the sauce he had left inside the casserole and some cooked slices of orange.

“Am I biased or is your cooking actually getting more complicated than it needs to be lately?” England asked with nonchalance as he eventually had the courage to start on his own beautifully arranged slice of meat.

He had no chance to even taste it, though, when a loud noise made his head snap back up to stare at his lover. England’s eyes slowly lowered to the knife snapped in half in his lover’s right hand, and then back up to notice France’s right eyebrow twitching and his smile that was obviously strained.

“My cuisine is perfectly *alright*,” France growled back, his tone of voice annoyed with a bit of murderous intent to it.

“You went to Italy, didn’t you.” England stated plainly.

France answered by standing up in rage, slamming both his hands on the dining table as a dark aura gathered around him.

“Those wretched children dared to tell me that my cuisine was unsophisticated, do you imagine that!?” France yelled, his blue eyes turning flaming red.

“France!” England called his lover kindly attempting to quell his rage. “Everyone knows that you have great food too. It’s not really worth it to make comparisons—”

“I am the comparison!” France countered loudly, his evil glare turning slightly mad as he chuckled at the victory he was literally tasting on his tongue. “I’ll show them what France can do when he puts his mind to it. The whole *world* will worship my cuisine and Italy’s will just be a faint memory in the pages of history!”

The light chuckle turned quickly a loud evil laugh that reverberated inside the whole dining room. America and Canada, who had looked at France’s dramatic scene with very little interest, then seeing that the main act had ended they simply turned to their meal and resumed eating.

After a few moments of due consideration, England decided to do the same. France's relationship with his own family wasn't any healthier than theirs.

After the culinary drama was finished, the rest of the dinner went on quiet enough, as both parents attempted to focus on the news coming from their children. As soon as they finished eating their dinner, Canada and America admitted to be too tired to stay up more, so England scooped them up and brought them upstairs to tuck them to bed as France cleared the table.

This left their parents free to enjoy some unexpected time together. As soon as the children were set in their beds, England went back to France to help him with the dishes.

"America likes Voltaire, did you know?" France decided to break the silence that had dawned on them.

"You could stop bringing his books home, if this is going to become a problem," England countered, understanding where the discussion was going to go.

"You can't stop me from being their father, England," France answered his lover plainly. "You have conquered most of America and then Canada, but even if you eventually get all of them, *I* set the trend when we speak about culture and literature." Then, in a quieter tone he added, "At least leave me this."

"As a nation and as a father, I would be less suspicious if I saw you actually certain of what you preach," England countered, searching for his lover's eyes as he set the rag away. "This is not courtly love, France. Please, talk to me, I need to know what crosses your mind."

France dried his hands and then let England take his wrist to lead him to the other room, so that they could seat in front of the fireplace. England made him sit in his lap, a position a bit uncomfortable considering that France was more muscular than him, but it still felt quite cosy and it was what they needed at the moment.

True to what England had guessed, France automatically curled up around him, his arms around England's neck and his face hidden against England's neck. The island nation started rocking him gently in his arms and sighed as he tightened his grip on him, a hand finding its way among the soft curls of France's long hair.

To be the two most powerful nations in the world, they certainly looked like a mess.

"Please, talk to me," England told him, turning his head hoping to meet France's stare but seeing only his pale neck. He left a kiss there and went to undo the low ponytail that tied France's hair, now long way past his shoulders. His hand teased the length of his neck to move the golden mass of hair over his shoulder and enjoy the pale skin there. As he suspected, however, a new scar had appeared right under the nape of his lover's neck, a fine slash that divided in two the upper part of his back between his shoulders.

He knew his lover's body and his scars too well, however, to have doubts about it.

"This is personal, isn't it?" England asked, caressing the scar as he uncovered more of his lover's skin. "Are you hiding it?"

France's hold on him tightened, urging England to kiss him reassuringly where his jaw met his neck, one of the places France's loved to be kissed.

"I'm so confused, England. My people and my sovereign have never been so far apart, and what Voltaire teaches... It feels good sharing it with America and whoever will listen, it feels right..." France admitted eventually, staring vaguely in front of himself. "I can't understand myself anymore, it's too confusing at the moment. I need... to shed light on things."

England let a soft chuckle escape his lips, teasing France's skin lightly. "I heard about the Enlightenment, but I didn't think you felt it this much."

"*Les Lumières*," France said in a soft whisper, as England eventually freed him completely of his shirt and the scar became visible for all its length. "I wonder if it might be the solution to save us all."

France took his chance to finally stare back at England, their eyes meeting uncertainly as both of them tried to understand the other.

"*Us* all?" England asked, his voice almost trembling.

France swallowed and then he turned to the side to look towards the stairs that lead to the sleeping quarters where America and Canada were sleeping.

"Change is not always bad and sometimes we can't stop it," France attempted to explain. "We can just make sure to guide it to the right direction."

Recognizing his own words, England felt his whole body shake in fear at the prospect that France's statement had painted in his mind and he took a firmer hold of his lover, in order to lay him down on the floor on his back as he towered over him. France's attention was quickly back on him.

"France, you cannot control this, look at yourself!" England pleaded, as he noticed few more scars marring France's body. "The children and I can survive, somehow, but you—"

"I—" France interrupted him, closing his eyes in resignation. "I don't think I can stop this. I don't even think I want to *stop* this."

England felt his eyes watering as he let his weight fall on France. As soon as he felt France's caring arms tightening around him, he started crying in earnest, hoping that his fears were just that.

Fears.

## Chapter End Notes

A/N: Of course Canada was actually there from the beginning, still France noticed him only when he actually searched for a reason behind England's weirdness

# The American Revolution

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Before long, all the reigns in Europe willing to get into war decided which one to take as an ally, France or England, by just rolling a die or tossing a coin, taking for granted that the other nation would pair up with their rival.

Needless to say, when they eventually settled the dispute by making America finally choose between the two of them, the whole Europe had taken a deep sigh of relief and –admittedly – England and France did too.

Even though they had apparently solved their main reason to bicker, during the following years things didn't proceed much differently from what they had gotten used to before. The only proof that time was passing by was the worsening of France's condition and the quick growth of America, who began to surpass his twin brother but also his fathers. Both situations worried England to no end but, as long as all the three members of his family were healthy and lively, he could allow himself to hope for the worst not to happen.

"I'm home," England announced one evening, after a tiring voyage across the ocean.

Instead of the charming family scene he hoped to see, however, he was welcomed by a still teen-looking Canada sleeping on the sofa with a French grammar manual over his face, while France and America yelled at one another. The two taller nations were heatedly discussing apparently over some philosophical concepts England had never cared about, surrounded by something like ten books all opened and scattered in various places all around them. Among those, there were some books in French, some translations in English and a French-English dictionary. Both nations seemed so involved in their fight that they didn't even noticed England's arrival.

"If you're not up doing it first, why do you write it in your books!?" America was screaming, staring straight in his French father's eyes.

"We're speaking about new philosophical concepts; you can't just take what you like and apply it at random!" France countered heatedly, his dramatic gesticulation giving away just how much he felt aggravated by the accusations.

"What are you supposed to wait for? *Empirical confirmation*?" America protested, taking one of the books around them and showing it to France, evidently quoting his last words from it. "You said it yourself, it's philosophy!"

"You can't change years of history like that!" France argue against him, straightening his back and crossing his arms on his chest, hoping to bring the topic to a conclusion. "There's a time and a place for everything!"

"Wait?? I'm sick of waiting, what am I even waiting for!"



“That's my line! What more do you need?” France countered highly unnerved. “England is giving you plenty of freedom!”

“Freedom to do what!? Where is the freedom I'm supposed to have??” America yelled back at France, almost hysterical. “Why are you in this house if you are supposed to be our enemy! Why are you free to come and go as it pleases you!”

“America–” France attempted to say before being stopped once again.

“If everyone is equal, why do we have to wait a time and a place to be like you!?” America lashed back, successfully managing to shut up France, who could just stare back at him in shock.

England's eyes traveled from the still irate but slightly guilty expression America was currently making to France's flabbergasted one and decided to take the fight in his hands.

“America, should we send you back to bed without dinner?” He reprimanded the younger nation.

America and France noticed him only then and both of them turned at the same time to stare at him, surprised. The resemblance between them had never been so striking.

“Am I supposed to be punished only because I say what I think, now?” America protested, slightly more subdued but evidently still quite angry.

“It all depends on how you say it,” England countered dangerously, glaring back at America. “And on what you intend to achieve by saying this.”

“What I want to achieve?” America asked, shocked by the question. “We were having a conversation!”

“A conversation about some bullshit freedom!” England bit back, taking a couple of steps closer to France and America. “I already told you to not speak about that with France!”

“England...” France attempted to say, but was immediately stopped by England's glare.

“I had some questions. I asked them.” America said pointedly. “Or am I not allowed even to ask questions, now?”

“You are,” England admitted quietly. “But you are not allowed to answer back at him. Who taught you to show so little respect for those who helped rising you!?”

“France helped rising *you* too, and you are always answering back at him!” America pointed out, his eyes growing larger with outrage. “I'm not a child anymore! I'm my own country!”

“You are a child, that's why you are being scolded!” England bellowed at him, pointing in the direction of their sleeping quarters. “Now go to your room! Clear your mind of these stupid things and get ready to tell France that you are sorry!”

“Say what you want, the both of you! I won't listen to you anymore! I hate you both!”

The younger nation then stomped his feet hard on the floor and rushed upstairs to his room in front of the shocked stare of both parents.

France lowered his eyes in a mix of shame and sadness at the scene, and went to sit next to Canada, who had woken up during the derailing of the fight and was currently staring confused at his brother's hasty retreat.

"It's all right, *mon cœur*," France reassured him, caressing his head kindly. "It's just a disagreement."

Canada just held tight to his polar bear and hid his face behind it, letting himself to be cuddled by France.

"I told you that you couldn't control it," England told France plainly, shaken he himself by America's reaction and quite a lot angered with his lover.

"I never thought it would spread so quickly," France countered, affecting pure annoyance at the reprimand.

"The Enlightenment is a plague, France, it will kill us all," England continued. "And even if it doesn't, look at what it's doing to us and America. Thank God Canada keeps himself out of this."

"My monarchy is against it too. We won't side with America in case of a rebellion, so: what point are you trying to make?" France protested, holding Canada close to his chest in a way that he wouldn't hear much of their fight.

"The point is that we lose America and our empires will go straight to hell!" England countered, earning a tired scoff from his lover.

"I am the melodramatic one, *mon cher*, don't let your fantasy run wild," France countered with a shrug. "I won't leave America to think alone about what anguishes him, however, no matter the consequences. You already got all my possessions here in North America, don't even think that there's much left for me to lose."

"Your cultural dominion extends further than your reach because of me, France, you know it," England pointed out. "Don't even think that my defeat doesn't mean yours too!"

"Then you see? There's no need for lands," France concluded sadly.

"I need to have lands for you too, France..."

"I don't need you to do this for me. If I want lands, I'll get my own... And if the rest of my empire falls, I'll find another way to maintain my influence."

England stared confused at France, completely missing the point his lover was attempting to make for the first time in his life.

They were strong nations, greedy for lands, especially for one another's... Was France giving up? Would he really still be the France he knew without his arrogance and his power?

“I-” He began, shock starting to have the best of him as he stared with big unfocused eyes at his lover. “I can’t understand what you’re saying...”

France stared sadly at England’s distress and sighed, before turning to Canada, still clutched tight to him.

“Would you mind waiting upstairs with your brother for *papa* and *maman* to finish this, *mon chou*?” He asked Canada in a soft voice. “Tell America that we’ll call him too when dinner is ready, we are not angry at him anymore.”

Canada turned towards England, as if he wanted to ask confirmation of what France had said.

England just sighed and nodded, prompting Canada to stare once again at his other father.

“France—” Canada attempted to ask, uneasy leaving the situation hanging like that.

“We’ll be fine,” France reassured him, caressing kindly his hair and then leaving a small peck on the top of his head. Eventually, the younger nation nodded, disappearing upstairs to his brother’s bedroom.

“Will we really be fine, France?” England asked unsurely, closing the space between himself and his lover to take the seat next to France that Canada had vacated.

“Dominion isn’t only a matter of how many little brothers you have, England,” France told his lover quietly, placing a hand on his shoulder as his lips got closer to England’s ear shell. “This is why our relationship keeps going on no matter what we do. This is how we manage to have power over one another despite and because of the wars we fight.”

England felt cold shivers running down his spine and France took it as his chance to finally bit the soft skin he had only barely teasing.

“No war can delete the traces my culture and my language left on you,” France kept telling England, letting his fingers trail along his neck. “And nothing makes me feel more alive like your attempts to deny it.”

“France—” England attempted to protest, even when he eventually let France lay him down on the sofa. “In this age is actual dominion that matters, you’re risking too much.”

“I’ll be fine, Angleterre,” France reassured him with a smile, allowing himself to caress his worried lover’s cheek.

“Let me help, France...” England pleaded, answering back his lover’s touch. “It’s too dangerous for you—”

“Then you can have my dying body, my dearest enemy,” France told him, before capturing his lover’s lips into a heated kiss he soon interrupted before England could attempt to answer it. “For now, let me just feel the power of the British Empire I helped create at his apex. Let me feel you tremble under me in pleasure, England. Let me remember what use a monarchy can have, because all my body is crumbling and I honestly can’t imagine one right now...”

England groaned into his lover's mouth and trapped him between his legs as his hand went to undo France's low ponytail, the cascade of blond wavy hair falling to frame France's face like a golden curtain.

"I will always love you, France," England promised, staring deep into France's eyes.

France stared some moments into England's honest green eyes, wondering why that felt like a goodbye to him. Maybe it wasn't and it was just his imagination, but maybe this would really be the last time they would talk with one another.

To a goodbye, unfortunately, he could only answer with his own.

*"Moi aussi, Angleterre."*

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The last provisions were being loaded inside the ship that would soon depart for the new world. It was a cold night and the fog was so thick that France would have thought he was currently in London if it wasn't for a poor man playing the accordion not too far from the docks.

As he watched sailors and helpers running from one side to the other to finish up the preparations for the departure, France lowered a bit more the hood over his face and closed the cloak tighter around himself.

It was cold, but that wasn't his reason to envelope himself in that dark attire that made him look like a bulkier version of England whenever he hid away to do magic... not that his lover could even consider that France knew everything about it. Unfortunately, some of the people who were about to leave on that ship knew him very well and he had no real desire to meet them and give them an account for his presence there. France just wanted to see the ship depart so he could be left alone with his thoughts and contradictory feelings.

He hadn't had the courage to dress up in incognito, though, since he was still fighting with the part of himself that wanted to go. And the French uniform really was something France had to revalue each time he used it or England plainly laughed in his face because he looked like he was attracting attention on purpose. Nothing ever lasted with France, though, since he still deemed his uniform unworldly cool. What was worse was that, each time France put his hands on his elegant uniform, it just turned out gaudier...

And in the dim game of light and shadows, the deep red still visible under the cloak was impossible not to notice.

Desire and fear of being discovered mingled in his heart and France swallowed, feeling the coldness coming from inside his own bones and the tension freezing him up in the spot.

“Who’s there!?” A well-known voice shook him out of his worrying, and France plainly cursed his luck.

As the man approached him, the torch he was carrying cast a trembling light on France’s frame, making him appear almost as if caught in a play of light and shadows flickering over him. Even though the torch did not quite illuminate much, it was impossible for France not to recognize his friend, and thus knowing who it was he rose his hands in surrender.

“*C’est moi, mon ami*,” France admitted tiredly.

The newcomer inched even closer in order to confirm his nation’s identity properly. When he recognised the blond Frenchman, however, he let out an annoyed and irritated scoff.

“I would have never thought to see France here,” the soldier noted noncommittally, snorting as he said his name. “Are you here to sabotage the departure?”

“Why so much hate and distrust, Marquis de Lafayette?” France attempted to counter, even though his voice came out just as labile as Canada’s. “I only came to see you leaving.”

“France is in ruins and I don’t see you doing a single thing to help changing things!” The aristocrat bit back with a growl, hoping not to be heard from the other people populating the docks.

“I don’t rule my monarchy, my monarchy rules me as they do with you and the rest of my children,” France stated plainly, only managing to anger the Marquis more.

“I always talk with them—”

“—and they say yes to your face only to keep doing what they want when you turn your back,” France concluded his friend’s statement. “I know that, they do the same thing with me...”

“You are our *nation*, you should be fighting more for the people of France!” the Marquis yelled back at his nation, highly unnerved by his attempts to close the discussion. “You should be fighting for yourself after all!”

“You are not fighting for France yourself, *mon cher* Marquis. Apparently the freedom of America is more valuable to you than the freedom of France!” France countered on the same tone.

The Marquis blinked twice at his nation’s words and, surprisingly, so did France, who hadn’t really realised what he had said until he noticed the Marquis expression. The aristocrat, however, quickly resumed a more courteous manner.

“The freedom... of France.” He repeated quietly. “I wasn’t aware you wanted freedom, *mon ami*... Is France really in chains?”

France lowered his eyes, his face hidden once again by the shadows of the night and the hood he had never really taken down.

“I- I don’t really know, I feel like I’m torn in two,” France admitted, eventually feeling the weight of all those last years of suffering. “Maybe not now, but soon... Things might *need* to change.”

The other Frenchman stared at his nation petrified, as a new challenge appeared in front of his eyes, a challenge way more personal than the one he’d had every intention to fight in a few weeks.

“A civil war...” He whispered, his eyes large with shock. “Are we really going to end up there?”

“A revolution,” France corrected him, eventually looking up to properly stare at the aristocrat. It was just enough that only one of his blue eyes was visible, still the Marquis had to fight with himself to not kneel in front of his nation. His nation who had never looked so serious since the day they had met. He had no qualms saying that his nation was a goddamn idiot, whenever left to his own devices, yet now he looked completely serious... Had France's enemies ever seen France like that? Somehow, he highly doubted it.

The Marquis took a deep breath and steadied his shoulders, his stare firm on his nation. The two things had to be related.

“Why did you come here tonight, then?” He asked plainly. “Honestly.”

France closed the cloak tighter around himself once again, trying to quell his discomfort.

“I—” France stuttered in embarrassment, somehow reassuring the Marquis that he was still the cute idiot he knew. “—I just wanted to ask you to take care of America for me. He has gotten strong, but in many things he's still a child.”

The experienced soldier rose a dubious eyebrow at his nation, and bent his head to his left in confusion as he studied him.

“You could come with us,” He offered eventually. “There's place for one more.”

“France should stay out of these things,” France pointed out awkwardly. “How can we keep control of our own dominions and protectorates if we support the rebellion of England’s colonies?”

“Whose words are those?” The Marquis kept asking, a smart half-smile finding his way on his lips. “Yours, the royal family’s, or your boyfriend’s?”

France’s blue eyes shot up in panic, but the Marquis just chuckled back at him.

“Please, you’re not careful at all,” He explained. “It’s a wonder how you keep going while being constantly at war.”

“Usually it is the one in charge who decides foreign policies,” France countered, blushing deeply. “As for us, we just want to pick on one another and war is a tool like any other... even if not the most favourable.”

The Marquis laughed lightly before closing up the space between himself and his nation.

“Then, if love is not the problem, what's really stopping you?”

“I'm the French nation, I should do what's good for my interests and what my sovereigns tell me,” France repeated dutifully. “Taking away England's dominion on America go against everything—”

“You didn't answer my question.” The Marquis pointed out. “What do you want to do?”

“I— I think... I think that I taught America that freedom was a fundamental right. I did this, I can't leave him alone, not if he has to fight with his own father.” France eventually admitted, his eyes moving up to follow the flames of the torch and, in doing so, showing the Marquis his sheer anguish. “America is not like us, not yet.”

“You can't want something we don't really want, don't you?” The Marquis offered kindly, making France finally stare back at him.

“I- I don't.” France acknowledged, letting a soft chuckle escape his lips.

“Then, what does the French nation want to do regarding a fellow nation that wishes for his own freedom?” The Marquis concluded dramatically, smiling widely at his friend.

France stared into the Marquis's eyes for a while, then straightened up he himself and walked towards the ship ready to depart behind at the aristocrat's back.

“*Allons enfants de la Patrie*,” France answered him as he walked to the Marquis' side.

An extremely satisfied Marquis followed him, taking great pride to see, as his nation moved forward, the hood finally falling from France's head and thus allowing his blond cascade of hair to sparkle in those few lights they had allowed for the departure.

He had been certain to have Right and Reason at his side when he'd decided to go against the orders and help America in his revolution, still he had known it wouldn't be enough to make him secure that he was doing the right thing. Now that he had his nation at his side, however, he had everything he needed.

And together they were going to win.

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Major [Benjamin Huger](#) was staring resolutely in front of himself, searching the open landscape for any sign of the arrival of the French support that was supposed to meet him. There was still plenty of time before they were expected to come... and that worried him quite a bit.

“They will never come!!! We’re alooooneee!!!” America was crying and yelling desperately behind him in the background. “It’s the eeend!”

The Major’s right eyebrow twitched.

“You’re so melodramatic that I would think you’ve got French blood in you, son.” He sighed in discomfort, praying God that the Marquis and his men would arrive sooner than expected. He was beginning to understand only then why General [George Washington](#) had left the young nation in his care.

What he had taken as an honour for him and the French support was actually just a way to pass over the babysitting duties to someone else.

*“The rockets’ red glare! The bombs bursting in air!”* America whined in the background, uncaring of the whole concept of dignity and adding to the Major’s increasing migraine.

Distracted as he was, he noticed a group of people approaching only when the soldiers were a few feet from them. After a quick glance to their flamboyant uniforms, he happily recognised them as the French troops he had been waiting for.

“Welcome to America, my friends!” The Major greeted them, his polite words finally managing to make America interrupt his ramblings.

The Major had only enough time to shake hands with the Marquis the Lafayette and exchange with him a few quick words of gratitude that America quickly rushed towards the two soldiers to hug the French aristocrat tightly.

“We’re not doomeed!!!” He cried out in joy, in front of the distraught stare of Major Huger, who was seriously considering the chance to get an interpret to plead forgiveness to the Frenchmen the proper way.

Before long, however, America let the shocked Marquis go and offered him a big happy smile.

“Thank you for coming!” He offered cheerfully.

The Marquis blinked a couple of times at America before bursting in laughter in front of the confused stare of Major Huger, who was already taking for granted the diplomatic incident.

“And what would your name be, young gentleman?” The Marquis asked suspiciously, already guessing the answer – or better, the lack of it.

“My name? I- I am.... I am....” America trailed off, realising he hadn’t really thought that through.

He had completely forgotten Washington’s suggestion to find a human name for himself before meeting the French troops, and now it was too late to cry about it.

“Alfred! I’m Alfred!” America decided eventually, proud of his choice.



The Marquis of Lafayette chuckled at his antics and shook his head before signalling to someone of his entourage to come forth.

“*Monsieur Bonnefoy?*” He called. “I’m quite sure you would be better come forward and do the honours.”

Both America and Major Huger stared curiously behind the Marquis as a young blond soldier approached them, his face hidden by the shadow of the army hat he was wearing. Only when he was closer to them the young soldier stared back at the Americans and said hello to them taking away his hat.

“*Maman* France is here, my dear *Amérique*,” France offered with a happy smile that could rival America’s.

“France!” America yelled, throwing himself in his welcoming embrace and completely forgetting even the basics of Washington’s recommendations. “I thought you wouldn’t come, they said—”

“Nothing would keep me away from you, my dear,” France told him, tightening his hold on him.

“But England—”

“That’s the least of my problems, sweetheart.” France interrupted him, freeing him from the hug and fighting against his better nature to not cuddle his son to death as he was used to. “*Papa* England and *maman* France are always at war.”

America blinked a couple of times at him confused before pouting, both at being remembered that he was about to face his father and at not getting more than just a simple hug.

“Don’t I get more cuddles or a kiss?”

France offered him a sad smile before lowering his head in resignation. If this was so hard, how were they supposed to survive America’s independence?

“I thought you wanted your independence,” He told him. “After this you will be our equal. There's no reason for us to indulge you anymore.”

America stared sadly back at France and then nodded obediently, breaking his father's heart.

“Then, let’s go to Philadelphia.” America announced quietly, his voice trembling only a bit as he gave his back to France in order to lead the French troops where Washington was waiting for them.

Only when America couldn’t see him anymore France looked up at his retreating back, tears threatening to fall. The Marquis the Lafayette could only stare sadly at his nation, until he decided he had enough of leaving him to face off everything alone and embraced his shoulders in a friendly gesture.

It was a small gesture, but it would be enough until everything was settled.

Unfortunately, the war was only at its beginning.

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When there was supposed to be the final showdown between England and America, the French troops among which France fought were in a completely different place. Despite that, France managed to fight off the mud and the dead soldiers left forgotten on the ground. He also quickly got rid of the enemies attempting to stop him, uncaring of all the other skirmishes still going on around him. Eventually, he finally reached a small hill not too far from the battlefield and from where he could finally see what was going on with the rest of his family.

He felt like he had been petrified on the spot, though, when he saw England pointing his firearm against a disarmed America. England would never choose to kill off another nation, no matter how annoyed and brutal he could become with them. Dying wasn't really a big deal for the nations, actually, but there were many ways of dying. The majority of those were just heavy defeats, some of which brought also substantial changing for the dead nations.

Still, there were situations in which actual and definitive death would follow, and each nation clearly felt which situation it would be whenever it was about to happen. As a general rule, moreover, baby or young nations were the most fragile and the most easily killed off definitively.

England had always stopped whenever those situations were about to happen, despite attempting – and sometimes succeeding - to kill even France plenty of times. France was not going to die definitively, though. America would.

Therefore, England certainly couldn't decide to start erasing nations by killing America, not their own son. Everyone but him... Despite the consequences.

When he saw the rifle landing on the mud and England giving up, France fell on his knees, all his energies apparently drained as the fear and tension he had accumulated left him.

America had won.

What had been their family for two hundred years was gone.

England had lost America's possession, and now France had no hope to maintain his cultural dominion over him either. He would write his own literature, eat his own cuisine and sing his own songs.

In the downpour following the end of the battle, his tears finally had the freedom to fall down his cheeks too, the same freedom that England and America now had, as well.

Soon after he had given up on America, without saying a word, England left the battleground and wasn't at all surprised to see France crying not far from where his debacle had happened.

He walked towards him until he stood right in front of his lover, hoping to force him to look up at him and meet his eyes. The Frenchman, however, despite recognising England's approaching, just kept crying and staring at the wet ground beneath him.

England sighed at France's reaction and simply knelt in front of him.

“You could have stayed home. France was not really involved,” He offered kindly, cupping his lover’s cheek with his hand to make him look finally up at him.

“France is more than just a little involved, England, and you know it,” France countered, still not managing to stop the tears from falling and unwilling to stare back at his lover. “I’m rather involved.”

“We lost him,” England admitted plainly, his voice slightly breaking.

Only then, did France actually look up at England despite his better judgement, and as predicted felt his heart break from the deep sadness and guilt. He swallowed the feeling, then, and pulled him into a tight embrace that hoped to bring as much comfort as he could. Despite the mixed feelings that England was experiencing for France at the moment, the hug was soon returned.

Unfortunately, for now, there wasn't much that they could do for one another or to change the situation they were in. They could only sit there in the mud, under the downpour, hoping that the rain would wash away the pain they felt in their hearts along with all the tears and blood they had shed during that devastating war.

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For all that France was officially not involved –at least at the beginning– it was decided that the treaty would be signed in Paris, reason why England, France and America decided to depart together towards Europe along with the Marquis of Lafayette.

All three nations had quite a low morale, so they eventually just sat in silence against one of the rails of the ship, France and England leaning one against the other and America curled on himself near France.

The tension was so evident that none of the sailors and soldiers on the ship even attempted to talk with them. America felt bad for winning against one who had always been a father-like figure to him; England felt defeated, highly traumatised by the loss, and deeply divided between the need to restore at least their family ties and the impossibility to do so without admitting to America that they were a real family to begin with. It would be unfair to America, though, and England had no way to foresee what would happen.

France felt the same things England and America felt, together with a deep sense of guilt. Guilt towards his lover, his sons, his sovereigns, his people. He had eventually leaned towards England mostly to attempt stopping himself from taking America in his arms and

promise him to make him an apple charlotte to see once again his smile, deeply conscious that England was fighting his same battle. Without the apple charlotte, of course.

Eventually, it was England the first to break the silence with a sad and discomforted laugh.

“Looks like it ends the way it began,” England offered after a while, in an unofficial answer to the worried stares he was receiving from France and America.

“*Angleterre?*” France asked confused.

England then turned to stare at him with eyes full of love, despite the situation they were in.

“Don’t you remember? I brought you on one of my ships in 1454 and asked you to come and celebrate Beltane with me,” England explained. “Our little adventure in parenthood honestly started from there.”

“Oh, my,” France remembered gladly, smiling back adoringly at his lover as his eyes finally shone once again in pure delight at the memory. “I made you a surprise dinner the night we arrived~”

“You drugged me with your fish soup, you mean,” England corrected, pouting at his lover.

“I didn’t!” France petulantly defended himself. “I only added some spices for flavour!”

England and France sent daggers at one another through their eyes, until they just smiled at one another and stopped quarreling, to rest their forehead against one another’s.

“Then Beltane came.” England sighed, closing his eyes and inhaling deeply, happy to indulge himself with the clean scent of France's soap.

“What’s with Beltane?” America interrupted them, walking on all fours in front of them to look at both his parents.

France and England simply stared sadly back at America and then exchanged only a brief glance between them, before they made some space between the two of them, knowing that it was now or never.

“America, come between the two of us, we need to tell you something.” England announced, offering him a tired smile.

America stared back at him unsurely, fearful to even move a foot in his direction.

“England won’t stop loving you just because you won a war against him, my dear,” France took his chance to explain, understanding America's fears. “Look at us, we’ve been at war since forever and we’re still here.”

America nodded and tentatively toddled towards them to sit between the two older nations.

“So?” He asked timidly, eyeing suspiciously both of them in turns.

“Can you keep a little secret?” England asked him, attempting to sound a bit conspiratorial.

“You screw France?” America asked innocently, earning France’s loud laugh for it.

“Is it even a secret?”

“France!” England reprimanded heatedly.

“*Oui Oui, mon cher,*” France answered, pretending to look serious once again.

“America, there’s a reason I never wanted you to call me older brother,” England explained quietly. “And it’s the same reason why losing you feels worse than losing any other little brother I have.”

America stared back at England not really understanding what he wanted to say. Then something clicked in his mind, and he turned shocked at both the older nations.

“What France says in French... It’s not really true, isn’t it?” America asked, frozen in panic at the realization.

“It’s true, my darling,” France told him plainly. “I never really wanted to lie to you, but—”

“But I don’t speak French, you knew I wouldn’t pay attention!” America began yelling, until something else clicked inside his mind, making his heart sink in his chest. “Canada *knows*.”

Now it was England’s turn to stare shocked at France, who just nodded quietly under the pressuring stare of his family.

“*Oui*, Canada knew from the start.”

“Why did you tell him and not me?” America asked, feeling completely betrayed by the news. “Why wait until now?”

“Telling Canada is *my* mistake,” France admitted. “He’s a smart boy and he *does* speak French.”

“Why a mistake!? You are telling me now!” America continued. “I- We could have—”

“You wouldn’t be here if you had known,” England anticipated France’s explanation, realising with a sigh why his lover had called telling Canada a mistake. “You would have waited and hoped to find a compromise.”

“Like Canada,” France confirmed.

“You both are a wreck,” America pointed out. “Wouldn’t it have been better for you?”

“Not for you,” England admitted, swallowing hard. “We’re nations, these kinds of family ties are not supposed to matter... They are not even supposed to exist, actually. Usually the parent nation dies before the child grows.”

“It's already complicated having brothers, cousins and lovers, because we are all at risk of fighting one another without much warning,” France pointed out. “Asking a parent to fight their child is just cruel.”

America stared first at England and then at France, both looking quite sad and discomforted.

“You’ve been together for almost six centuries through, however,” America pointed out quietly, much to his parents’ surprise. “So.... So the ties can survive. Despite the wars... I mean, if you survived through it as a couple, why can't we as a family?”

“I guess so,” England admitted, chuckling as he shook his head at America’s innocent attempt at peace.

“*Mais oui*,” France offered, moving to stare in front of America and next to his lover.

“Then...” America concluded, blushing slightly as he stared down at the tips of his own forefingers currently tapping one against the other in sign of discomfort. “Can I have that hug and kiss I didn’t get before the independence?”

Both England and France burst in laughter and draped over America to hug and molest him to their heart’s content.

It wasn't much, but they certainly could start from there.

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**T.B.C.**

## Chapter End Notes

A/N: "Allons enfants de la Patrie" is the beginning of the French anthem, "The rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air" is a quote from the American anthem. Bear in mind that none of them existed at the time of the American revolution

# The French Revolution and Le Terreur

After that, everything derailed.

England had actually anticipated it while he was shouldering the treaty of Paris –France would never get unscathed out of the mess he had created inside himself.

The island nation had plenty of problems of his own, however, and he couldn't deny the fact that losing America meant the end of his first empire. His land was still intact though, he had little brothers, his monarchy was strong and any that came to check on him realized that they had no chance to bully him for this defeat.

France on the other hand was breaking. England bet that the French nation and the aristocrat that had brought him to America were going to be contested privately for making France join the American Revolution. Things weren't getting public only because it resulted in a weakened England, something that considering the still ongoing wars between them was considered a great success.

The most laughable thing was that, for once, bothering England hadn't been France's intention.

France stood with a serious expression on his face, keeping himself silent for most of the meeting and looking terribly tired, like a nation that had lost, not one hosting half the world for a historical treaty.

When everything ended, America had been swooned away by all the other nations present at the ceremony, each of them eager to know him better and pretending to cheer for his freedom. All the while France and England had kept themselves to the side-lines in order to keep an eye on their son, resting shoulder to shoulder with their backs against the wall.

America wasn't the only one England kept surveying, though.

“You will keep a better eye on him if you just joined the celebrations like you are supposed to,” England pointed out eventually.

“Would I?” France asked distractedly. “I have no desire to do so, though. I'd just like they stopped pretending to be his friends...”

“*The enemy of my enemy is my friend,*” England declared sagely. “And I'm quite the world enemy at the moment.”

“Are you really? I remember that I'm supposed to be the first on your list of enemies, though, I won't accept you deeming another enemy nation as my equal in your eyes.”

“Is this a fit of jealousy that I hear?”

"Of course it is, I build my name on our animosity," France concluded proudly, before taking a deep resigned breath. "*Why* is Spain molesting him like that?"

"Do you realise that they are technically blood related through you?" England reprimanded him, rolling his eyes at the abrupt change of topic.

"It's not like Spain knows," France pointed out, biting his lower lips out of sheer nerves as he noticed his own sovereigns attempting to chat up America. "What if he stops asking us for what to do altogether? He might even take a liking to someone else..."

"You sound like a worried mother hen, France," England teased, but his heart sank when his lover didn't rise to his bait at all. "France?"

"Will you go back to the New World after the sign of the treaty?" France asked eventually, after a far too long minute of silence.

"I highly doubt it. I need to keep my home in check after this debacle," England answered, even though what he had actually wanted to say was 'to keep *you* in check'. "Why are you asking?"

"I want you and America out of my borders as soon as possible," France told him plainly, earning England's shocked stare on him before he could continue. "And *I* need to be out of this palace, before it turns me crazy."

"France—" England offered him, all but reassured by his statement.

France just sat down on the marble floor, though, and England decided to follow him there, attempting to keep himself close enough to give his lover comfort and uncaring enough not to rise any suspicions from the other nations present at the assembly. It still took England quite a while to find the proper words for his lover.

"Come to Great Britain, France. Stay at my place until things have settled in your country," England offered him eventually. "Or you could go back to the New World with America, he will be more than happy to hide you away until your people solve their problems... We still have Canada there, it will be safe."

"I won't hide, England. This is something I must do." France answered quite predictably, making England to harden his expression and clench his jaw hearing this. "Just promise me... to take care of the kids for me, as long as I'm going through this."

"I won't," England answered instead, earning France's surprised stare back on him. "America needs to be left alone to make his own decisions... and to suffer for those if necessary. Only if he can do that, will he grow into a strong nation, otherwise what you have done for him will just be wasted."

"I'll take care of Canada, though," he added, however, in a way kinder tone. "And be aware that... that I will also take care of you, no matter what I have to put us through to do that. Don't forget what I told you at the very beginning: I will never stop wanting you, in every way possible."



"I'm not so weak that you can conquer me so easily," France pointed out, pouting in disappointment. "Besides, I thought you liked me free and independent."

"I like you free, but not if you are in danger!" England protested quietly, his eyes following suspiciously Netherland who was casually passing by them to reach his own sovereign.

Netherland noticed England looking at him and turned questioningly at him, but the island nation just offered him a fake smile and waved him hello. Apparently traumatised by the gesture, Netherlands just waved back and resumed his search for his sovereign.

"I love you too much to lose you," England continued in a whisper, when he was certain that Netherlands was far enough not to hear them. "Remember that if I think that you are going to fall... I'll be the one who gets you, before anyone else. No one else will."

"That's creepy, *Angleterre*," France reprimanded elegantly, even though a teasing smirk finally found its place on his lips once again. "But also quite romantic~"

"Don't fall, France..." England pleaded his lover instead, ignoring his antics. "*Please*."

"I'll do my best, *mon cher*," France promised uncertainly, allowing himself to leave a small peck on his lover's lips. "I swear to you, I'll always come back for more."

Still, France did not manage to keep his promise, and this was something that England would have never been able to foresee.

After the treaty was signed and England and America had left together with the rest of the guests, France had left Versailles and joined the revolutionary forces against his own monarchy. Eventually, the Bastille fell and, despite the attempts of the moderate forces and France himself, things rapidly degenerated, bringing the Revolution to its most extreme consequences.

The regime called *Le Terreur* was established, and France found himself once again on the barricades, opposing his own governance. Contrary to what had happened with the monarchy, he couldn't leave Robespierre's side officially, though, since he still held favour amongst the French people.

When another round of decapitations began, however, France decided that he had enough of being just a bystander in front of his children's butchery.

"I oppose this decision!" France yelled during the regular assembly in which most of the Republican entourage was adjourned before the official meeting of the Convention. "You can't shed any more blood: it's my children we're talking about! The children of France! What good can all this bring? They are not enemies!"

"If it wasn't dangerous allowing them to live, I would be all for it," Robespierre argued plainly, visibly irritated by the interruption. "We can't let a few destroy our dream. I thought it was yours too."

"It was and it is, but this kind of price... I cannot allow it anymore!" France countered irately, standing up abruptly and slamming his hands on the table. "It ends now!"

"What power do you have, I beg your pardon?" Robespierre enquired, standing up as France had just done to walk closer to his nation, bringing with himself the notes he had written the night before. "Can you naturally move the hearts of the French people, maybe? Have you been elected to your duty, perhaps?"

"I'm *your nation*." France pointed out plainly, outraged at being talked down like he was a minor nuisance. "And *your nation* is asking you to have mercy on his children, like a father would do."

"Some people talked, you know?" Robespierre opposed to him with nonchalance, however, rolling his notes to form a cylinder to quell his evident nerves.

France stared back questioningly at him, not really understanding what Robespierre might be referring to.

"About what?" He decided to ask simply, safe in the knowledge that he had done nothing that would be considered going against his own interests or the Revolution. "I can only do what my people ask me to do," he added for good measure, though.

"Still, it looks like you have a steady relationship with Great Britain," Robespierre revealed plainly, staring at the rolled up notes in his hands instead that at the young republic in front of him.

"We have always fought against England." France pointed out, his voice barely containing his rage. "Our relationship never gave any kind of problems to anyone."

"We always had a monarchy, though. A Republic is something quite new for our nation... For *you*." Robespierre explained quietly his point of view, safe in the knowledge that he was willingly and openly accusing France in front of the Republican meeting. "Who knows with a Republic what will happen..."

"Robespierre, I'm not a traitor to the Revolution only because I don't want more people killed!" France yelled back at him, leaving definitively his position to stand in front of Robespierre and confront him properly. "And certainly I'm not a traitor because I fell in love with someone!"

"You went to America with Lafayette because he is your son, though," Robespierre pointed out, finally looking up to stare at France straight in the eyes. "*Against* the will of your sovereigns."

"To fight *against* my lover in the name of the same principles that brought us to change regime." France argued, enouncing each word slowly as he fought with himself to maintain a minimum of control.

"My point is," the politician offered then, with quite evident disdain. "If you opposed your government for your son once, how am I sure that something like that isn't happening again?"

What if this time is England that forces your hand? How do I trust you?"

"Trusting me means trusting yourself and the people of France." France countered. "Betrayal from my side can't happen, not to favour the monarchy or any other monarchy in the world. I'm a Republic."

"How can I be sure you won't have second thoughts and wish for the monarchy back?"

"I can't decide on my own," France repeated once again, failing to understand how such a basic concept could be so easily ignored. "To wish the monarchy back the people of France or their sovereigns must want it."

"What an easy way out," Robespierre disputed with an evil smirk, enjoying the scene of a completely confused France.

"It's not easy at all, it's just the truth!" France yelled back. "I have no reason to wish the monarchy back, I *am* the French Republic."

"I don't believe you," Robespierre disclosed eventually, now simply glaring at him. "And you can't speak as the French nation inside the Convention."

"What are you—"

"I'm telling you to shut it, French Republic, or you will be next!" Robespierre interrupted France resolutely, leaving to his nation only the chance to stare shocked at the other Frenchman.

All of sudden, England's promises to conquer him to solve the mess inside his borders didn't seem so crazy anymore in France's eyes.

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It was the 5 of April of 1793, the definitive end of those who opposed *Le Terreur*, at least as far as France knew.

When no one from the public standing for the execution moved a finger to defend the condemned Dantonists, France decided that he couldn't stand all that silent acceptance anymore. As the '*traitors*' approached the guillotine, France acted openly against those orders of death: he pleaded in front of Robespierre and the Parisians to spare their lives and to stop the killings once and for all. When someone eventually asked who was he to speak like that against the will of the Convention, France played his last card and exposed himself as the French nation, receiving mixed reactions from the public and a disgusted grimace from Robespierre.

As preannounced, Robespierre then declared him a fool, a liar and an enemy of the nation - an enemy of himself - and France was set to be the next in line for the guillotine, after the Frenchmen he had attempted to save.

Among the Parisians, clad in a dark mantle with a hood, England could only stare at the scene, petrified by the silent acceptance that had welcomed those crazy orders. He could only watch, like a spectator amongst all the others, how the people of France could condemn themselves for fear of what was coming from within them.

He could only stare at the execution that would take away from him his completely defeated lover, because as a foreign nation his own intervention was prohibited and because what was happening had never happened in the whole history of France.

No one of the nations had ever managed to tie France up like his own governance had done: France had always remained the outmost representation of beauty even in defeat. France had never been defeated or looked the part... until now.

His hair, now long down his back, appeared dishevelled despite being tied loosely with a blue ribbon. Fearing that the French nation could escape or that someone could act to save him, Robespierre had ordered to tie him tightly with strong ropes, which crossed his chest and bound his arms and wrists.

That decision was completely illogical in England's eyes, because as nations they could only obey, even if that meant suicide.

To add hurt to injury, moreover, France still proudly wore the revolutionary uniform, its light blue matching France's dull and sad eyes. An ill blotch of blue and white in all that red blood that was surrounding him as the heads of his children fell one after the other.

What must feel a nation that had been so badly treated by his own people? England did not know, but he was quite certain that not even France had an answer to that question at the moment. Not ever.

France should have mediated with his monarchy, he should have made them accept a Magna Charta or a bill of rights... Why had England left France alone to decide his future? He had lost America to those dreams of right and freedom, but America had been helped by France through that whole process and had survived the shock that any drastic change brought with itself...

France was going to die.

And not by his hand.

When the executioners put his head on the bottom of the frame, they didn't even take care to put aside his hair, so certain they were that the guillotine would have worked anyhow on their nation.

Despite knowing that he couldn't stop it, England fought through all the silent spectators of the macabre show in order to walk to the top front and steal a last glance at who had been the love of his entire life. He also hoped, deep inside himself, that France could see him before dying, to give him a tiny bit of reassurance that he was not alone. France kept his eyes resolutely low, however, urging England to call for him... But England's voice just wouldn't come out: not to ask the people to get the fuck out of his way, much less to call for his lover.

Eventually, he had no more time.

Without any particular sound or decree, the infamous device was activated and France's head rolled over the one of the Frenchman that had preceded him. It bounced lightly on it and unexpectedly fell on the square, rolling towards the public, who quickly took some steps backwards in fear and disgust. That allowed England to finally reach the front row, so that the befallen head could stop at his feet as if it had been all but casual.

Temporary death or not, caused by him or not, if there was something England had never gotten used to was watching France's death. He had never witness to a decapitation, moreover, and the sight of his lover's head detached from his body, his expression frozen in the grimace of the dead, suddenly was too much for him. His stomach lurched and his legs weakened, forcing England to kneel in front of the head that so little looked like his France.

Hands trembling, he reached for it to caress the pale skin lightly, scared to both feel and not feel the energy that kept them nations alive disappearing under his touch. Was it kinder to hope to have lost his lover forever, knowing that at least he wasn't feeling any more pain, or to hope that France was still alive, knowing that he was still feeling every muscle, vein and bone broke by the blade of the guillotine?

As he touched the warm skin of his lover's cheek, he felt his heart breaking in his chest and he couldn't stop himself to just weep all his tears.

"You killed him! You killed your own nation!" He yelled in agony, holding France's head to his chest, uncaring of the rivulets of blood dripping from it, soaking his cloak and smearing his hands. "You didn't deserve him, you won't deserve him anymore!"

The only answer Robespierre granted England was a loud laugh. Then, he took a firm hold of France's body, grasping tightly the ropes that still tightened up his body.

A gush of pure hate created around England at the sight, and the island nation quickly redirected it towards the French politician. The knots undid themselves and France's body fell at Robespierre's feet in a puddle of red blood.

Deeming it only the result of some careless bondage work, however, Robespierre just kicked France's body off the bench, so that he would roll off to the square not far from England.

"I was sure that Great Britain would be here," The politician teased. "I guess you didn't enjoy the show... your plans to conquer us failed, perhaps?"

England slowly made it to the body, so that he could re-join it to the head that he was still cradling to his heart.

"My plans to get actual dominion of France just began," England said with a tone of voice that froze the blood in the veins of most of the people still standing on the square.

He took France's bloody body in his arms, no differently from the many times in which one of them needed comfort and they cuddled together, in the darkness of one of their homes. France's head rested against England's shoulder, the younger nation's hand firm on his

lover's neck to keep the two pieces firmly together until they glued back themselves as they were supposed to.

The position, somehow, reassured England too, since the warm wetness of France's blood spreading all over his clothes allowed him to feel like his lover was already once again alive in his arms.

"He is *mine*, Robespierre." England continued eventually, his voice a low growl as his whole body tried to call back to him all the magical energy he could from his own lands. "*I* fight him, *I* hurt him and *I* fuck him, am *I* clear? You are nothing to him. You are not allowed to even touch him. Only one who knows how to take care of him can defeat him."

As he spoke, he could feel the wound around France's neck closing up, and his slow but steady breathing resume. The blood stopped flowing from France's wounds and England allowed himself a small smirk as the red liquid marring their skin was readily absorbed in a desperate attempt to gather more strength. For France, it was a quicker coming back to life; for England, the chance to get a more devastating revenge.

As England proceeded gathering energy and strength, the sky got cloudy and the air got colder and moister, France's blood allowing him to treat Paris not differently from London. France's blood and, most importantly, France's magic, the same magic he had given England to custody in 1454 before he forgot about it.

England calling back to France his own magic made the unconscious nation heal even quicker. Eventually his fingers started to spasms, as he was slowly but inexorably coming back to his senses. It was an almost imperceptible movement, but who had noticed it cried out in horror and allowed pure panic to grow stronger inside the crowd.

"You will learn not to oppose Great Britain." England threatened, glaring for the first time up at Robespierre. "France will be mine, as he should have always been."

The island nation took a deep breath and concentrated, allowing his feelings of pain and anger mingle and mix with his magic and the violet shaded energy tingling all around him.

*"Flare up and burn it down  
from corner to corner with that hellfire.  
Don't leave a single trace,  
burn down even their souls."*

England began chanting, and quickly the sky turned even darker, harsh gusts of wind began to blow around them and a thunder finally broke the silence.

In all that turmoil, eventually France opened once again his blue eyes, only to discover himself tightly held into his lover's embrace. His lover, who had apparently every intention to vindicate him. Fuck him.

*“Flare up and burn it down.  
Answer my calling right now.  
Burn down those fools  
with a crimson flame.”*

The earth rumbled, and some of the people watching the decapitation finally found in themselves enough courage to escape, crying out in fear.

“Magic through a children’s song!?” Robespierre yelled at England instead, before bursting in a mad laughter. “This is France, the *République des Lumières*! What will you do? Call forth spirits from a nation that hasn't got any?”

“France's magic is within my borders,” England explained, smirking evilly at Robespierre, who could only blanch in shock at the news. “France gave it to me to keep and protect it. I will defend him with it, so next time you will think twice before even thinking to lay a finger on what is *mine*.”

As he talked, the wind got stronger, the earth kept rumbling even more and more thunders crossed the darkened sky.

*“Santra ba dra winza na  
wonpa to rana intrakantera.  
Santra ba dra winza na  
wonpa to rana intrakantera.”*

He kept chanting, and true to his words from the depth of the French soil emerged an indefinite number of ancient demons, ready to kill and scare off everyone still daring to stand on the plaza where the French nation had died.

“England—” France tried to quieten him, his voice quite rasp from the decapitation.  
“Angleterre—”

“Be quiet, love,” England whispered to him, his lips brushing against his temple in a gentle kiss. “I’m here to protect you... France will pay.”

“England, you *can't* get revenge on my people,” France pleaded, despite the pain he still felt around his neck and in his throat. The world around him began to swirl and turn foggy, reason why he felt himself forced to close his eyes once again and grasp tightly England’s cloak. “You will hurt me more—” he added eventually, in a pained moan.

*“For the sake of my terrible revenge,  
I'll cast a curse with all my power!  
I summon thee from the distant earth! Come forth!”*

England kept chanting, however, as he tightened his grip on his too weak lover. The demons screeched and yelled even more as some of them combined into an even bigger one that went after Robespierre and his entourage.

*“Angleterre!”* France tried to yell, still feeling faint, his body unable to move properly. *“S'il-te-plaît, arrête!”*

“You are too precious to me, I'm sorry,” England answered his lover, taking his light weight in his arms bridal style in order to bring him away from the mayhem. “I can hold you in my arms with no fatigue, you bloody idiot! This is what you let them do to you!”

“You know I couldn't do differently...” France managed to say, his face buried against England's chest.

“That's why I'm here,” England told him, for the first time in a soft and reassuring voice.

Reassured that France was safe in his arms, England desperately searched around himself for a secure place where he could hide his lover until the demons had finished their devastation and he was once again strong enough to confront his sovereigns.

Unfortunately, he had truly lashed out the whole hell on Paris and no shelter was in sight.

“This way!” They heard the voice of a man call, at a certain point.

The man looked in everything like one of the Republican entourage, but England, having no other choice, merely took a firmer hold on France and follow the Frenchman.

France, on his end, could just hear the sound of rapid French in his ears. Reassured that someone in his state would still fight for him, France abandoned his head on England's shoulder and fell into a deep sleep, more akin to a tiring coma than a restoring rest.

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When he opened his eyes again, he was in a simple but comfortable bed. England was staring down at him, caressing some shorter bangs of hair away from his forehead worriedly.

“Francis, love, you woke up,” England was glad to notice. He attempted to offer him a kind and happy smile, but fear and anguish were still deeply showing on his tired features. “I



feared that you wouldn't wake up anymore."

"You came to save me," France offered him a big smile and took England's hand tightly in his. He left a kind kiss on its back as a silent thank you, and then finally turned to the other side of his bed, in order to stare at the other man in the room. "Philippe Rühl," He acknowledged, glad to see a known man.

"At your service, France." The French politician offered, his expression the epitome of worry. "May I ask what does this mean?"

"That your governance doesn't fucking care about your nation," England answered him before France could have a say on the matter, his voice a low growl as he physically got closer to his lover and brought their entwined hands closer to his chest.

Philippe stared at England and then back at France, who could however only nod at the other Frenchman.

"You shouldn't worry too much, though. Since before the Revolution I got nothing but scars on my body," France told him, attempting to reassure Philippe but just making England angrier.

"Is this worth, France?" England reprimanded him with a shaking voice, tightening his grasp on the other nation's hand. "Look at you... I thought I would die along with you, today..."

"Good thing you didn't then" France teased with an impish grin all but natural. "How would have I explained to your court that England had died heartbroken seeing his dearest enemy dying?"

"Don't joke about this, France, I beg you," England pleaded, his forehead resting against France's. "You can't even imagine how scared I was... If you have no care for yourself, at least have mercy on me..."

"England, why are you here, really?" France asked, already fearing the answer. "Are you going to—"

"I'm on my own, to keep you in check." England admitted. "We might consider attempting to come over here as an armed force, France, but it would not be the way you hope for."

"Can't you do anything?" France pleaded. "We don't really need a war—"

"I will agree with my court, if that's their decision." England told him plainly, his serious eyes never leaving France's worried ones. "I'll take care of you, love, until you will be strong enough to kick me out."

"England, you won't get us and you will only make things worse here," France attempted to reason.

"I already told you: I want you too much. You're worth turning the whole world into a battlefield," England's free hand reached out to cup France's cheek and caress it lightly.

"Is there anything we can do to stop this?" Philippe took his chance to ask to the two nations.

"You Frenchmen already did far too much," England cut short, as France just sighed.

"We should at least stop military expansion for as long as we don't have a strong central republican rule," France offered, making Philippe's eyes grow larger and England turn to stare at him with a risen eyebrow.

"Decapitation made you wiser?" England teased, earning France's scoff for it.

"I'm simply too tired," France explained petulantly. "It's just self-preservation, in all honesty."

"Maybe we should let you sleep," Philippe offered kindly, standing up to take his leave. Before he moved to the door, however, he stared back at England, silently asking him what he intended to do.

"I'd like to stay a bit more, if you don't mind," England asked, staring at his lover for approval.

"I wouldn't mind that," France answered, smiling back at him and tightening his grasp on England's hand.

"Alright," Philippe agreed then, walking quietly towards the door. "I'll inform the revolutionary assembly that France is safe for the moment."

That said, he offered them his goodbyes and exited the room. As soon as they were finally alone, England moved to lie down next to France on the bed and let his tired lover cuddling against him.

"This whole revolutionary thing is reckless," England reprimanded France as he began caressing the top of his head.

A small shiver crossed his back, however, as he noticed the straight cut of the guillotine ending abruptly his lover's blond curls. He had never voiced it plainly, but he had a sort of devotion to France's hair. So shiny, so soft, so perfectly curling in gentle waves. Seeing France's hairstyle ruined like that was something akin to witnessing a sacrilege.

"I know, I know... I can't control it," France mumbled, his face hidden against England's chest. He took a deep breath and inhaled deeply his lover's scent, allowing it to lull him into some sort of induced calm.

"Be serious for once, you damn idiot. You just died for that."

"The point is that you are right," France admitted tiredly. "Still, I'm not planning to surrender to you or to anyone else."

"I'll make you," England said, then froze in horror as his hand, that had been caressing France's hair, wandered too low and felt the abrupt end of it under his touch.

France felt England's discomfort and touched behind himself the place where England's hand had stopped in shock, hoping to understand what the problem was.

"Oh, my. My poor hair," France realised in complete annoyance. "Sorry, I'm sure I look a mess. It's a pity that I can't ask you to fix this..."

England just tightened his hold on his lover as he tried not to cry.

"I'm sorry," He managed to say eventually, choking down a sob.

France stopped fingering his badly cut hair to look up at his lover and finally notice his distraught expression. He kindly smiled at him, put his arms around his neck and pulled him down over himself, in order to kiss him passionately on the lips.

"How do you like scars, *mon amour*?" France asked England, as soon as they both found enough will to part.

"Don't be an idiot," England answered, moving to bite his lover's earlobe.

France groaned in pleasure and attempted to pull England together with him under the sheets. The English nation, understanding his lover's intention, just let him go and stood up once again, proceeding to free himself of his boots, cloak and uniform.

"You sure you want this?" He asked worriedly as he finally joined France beneath the sheets.

"More than anything," France replied, quickly resuming kissing England. His hands roamed appreciatively over the few thin layers of clothing left on his lover and soon he decided to proceed taking off those as well.

As England attempted to do the same thing, however, France stopped his hand in fear.

"It's not really a nice sight, you can leave me clothed... Just take away my pants, that should be enough," He suggested. England's eyes, however, automatically moved to France's neck, where an angry red scar had formed around it.

"You will always be beautiful in my eyes," England answered back, bending over his lover to kiss precisely that new scar. "It only hurts me knowing what all these scars mean..."

"You're so romantic today I could cry," France teased, finally allowing his lover to get him naked.

Despite the words he had spoken, after opening his lover's shirt England had to take a deep breath before continuing. France whole body was a real mess, so much that on his chest he could read all the recent history of the French Revolution. The thought that the fool had basically done this to himself, moreover, just irked England even more.

"I don't want other scars on you," England told France sternly, as he proceeded to lick the one around his neck for all its visible length, while at the same time he caressed with the tip of his fingers the biggest one crossing his chest. "I don't like you being reckless with what's supposed to be mine."

France felt soft shivers run along his spine at both England's touch and words.

"Take me, England," France whined. "Just for a while, let me forget the mess I'm in..."

"I don't want you to forget you died today, idiot!" England countered, even when he actually proceeded to take the oil he had retrieved from his own pockets to prepare France. "I want you to remember what happened, and to be more careful from now on. If not for yourself, do it for me."

"Oh, because you would suffer?"

"Because I would annex you," England corrected as one of his fingers found its way inside France and began stretching him carefully.

France moaned at the intrusion before smirking with complicity at his lover.

"That's why I love you. I adore how you try to keep me on my toes..."

"And I love you because I know you will never listen," England offered him, smiling kindly at him while adding a second finger. "You are something that defies my idea of reason."

"What a sweet way to say that I get on your nerves," France managed to answer back amongst his soft whimpers of pleasure. "Please, hurry up..."

"Be quiet, sweetheart," England managed to say, despite France's moans and teasing remarks that kept arousing him even more. As he added a third finger and felt France's anus twitch around him, he came to the conclusion that his only hope to endure long enough was to shut up France once and for all or simply get on with it. "After today the last thing I want is to hurt you."

"I thought you wanted to annex me," France breathed out, as his legs closed around England's waist to urge him to move on.

"That's for your wellbeing," England countered, finally deciding that he couldn't forego this any longer. He placed himself at his lover's entrance and kissed him briefly on his lips. "Ready, my love?"

"Please..." France whined, his mouth gaping open in pleasure as his lover finally entered him.

England quickly attempted to build up a suitable pace for the both of them, distracting France from the discomfort brought by a too quick preparation with kisses and teasing bites all over his beautiful skin.

Soon even the discomfort disappeared, and France could finally lose himself in the slightly irregular waves of pleasure England produced inside him. Even though sex was supposed to be tiring, France felt slowly regenerated by the attentive way in which England loved him. The mess of his internal politics had taken France and England apart during those last few years, reason why being once again inside those long missed arms was really like coming back home.

During these last years, surrounded by hate, death and distrust, what he had missed more than anything was England's honest way to love him. France looked up at England and found himself staring unexpectedly into England's green eyes, half closed in pleasure but still focused on him.

"You came back to me, honey?" England teased with a smirk, slightly quickening his pace.

"I never left you," France countered, answering the smirk with a smile of his own. "I was enjoying the ride. You really became good at this."

"I learned from the best," England almost purred, lowering himself to kiss France heatedly on his lips.

France moaned inside the kiss and embraced England's torso in a desperate attempt to drag him closer. When England finally managed to find France's prostate, France's nails scraped the soft skin of his lover's back, making England moan in a mix of pain and pleasure.

They parted to have the chance to breathe with a bit more ease, and France closed once again his eyes, turning his head to the side, lost once again in the well-desired pleasure. England, however, couldn't resist the temptation of France's bare neck in front of him, and took his chance to kiss and bite the soft skin there as much as France's condition allowed him. Encouraged by the soft whimpers he was receiving, he also took France's cock in his hand and began masturbating his lover in time with his thrusts.

"France..." England moaned in his lover's ear, his thrusts becoming more erratic as he felt France completely at his mercy under him, thanks to both the stimulation his cock was giving him and the caring attentions he was receiving. "Never leave me, please—,"

"Won't," France whimpered, and then he kissed England deeply, hoping to muffle his own groans of pleasure as he came between the two of them. England followed soon after, biting gently France's lower lip.

France moaned lightly, and slowly coerced England to kiss him properly. It was only after a while they were kissing and lazily touching and caressing one another that England couldn't keep himself on all fours anymore, and finally collapsed into France's ready embrace.

"I wish we could just sleep like this..." England moaned against France's shoulder, making France chuckle.

"I think that would bother Philippe quite a bit," France teased, feeling finally at peace with himself for the first time in a long while.

"Won't he be already bothered that we had sex in his home?"

"I wonder," France answered, actually considering it. "It's a quite obvious follow up when you leave two lovers together alone in the same room..."

England could just laugh at his lover's innocent remark. He kissed him deeply one last time and then he pulled out and off France, standing up to get dressed once again. It hurt having to

leave France like this and so soon, so much that the pain was almost physical.

"I'm feeling it too, you know?" France took his chance to say, as he turned to his side in order to stare at England properly. "It's hard to keep going like we used to."

"Most of the rules we took for granted during our past wars are shattering. Same as ruling," England agreed. "A republic and a monarchy are certainly different."

"It's not just that..." France admitted, licking his lips unsurely before continuing. "I really liked our little family overseas."

"You quite helped destroying it, I want to remind you—"

"You know I couldn't in good honesty stop him..."

"But you could have stopped yourself from helping him!" England yelled back at France eventually, his accusing stare firm on his lover.

France could only lower his head, staring sadly at the pillow under his head as he admitted his guilt.

"Angleterre—"

"If I think he is putting himself in danger, I'll go after him once again." England declared resolutely. "Like I'm going to do with you."

That said, he attempted to make a cool exit, but was stopped by France's quiet voice.

"Will you leave without even a last kiss?"

England turned to stare at his lover, still so pale and exhausted that made his heart aching and his blood boiling with fury at the memory of what had been done to him.

He walked back to the bed, then, and knelt in front of his lover to kiss his forehead kindly.

"I love you, France," He told him sadly. "Please don't die on me anymore. Even if I get angry at you, remember that I'm here for you."

"*Je t'aime, Angleterre,*" France whispered back to him. "I'm sorry I made you worry."

"If you didn't make me worry, you would be another nation," England teased him, smiling at him as he stood up to exit the room and eventually leave France.

France could only watch his back with a sad and tired smile on his lips, and think about how to get out of the mess he was in until he finally fell asleep.

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**T.B.C.**



# Imperialism and Restorations

France had woken up from his deep slumber to the sound of heavy military boots.

In the background, he could faintly hear Philippe's voice pleading not to bother France, since he needed rest. Despite the politician's attempts at reasoning, the door of France's bedroom was blasted open and the French General entered without even asking if it was alright to do so.

What met his eyes was the slim figure of a blond man with uneven cut hair, resting naked under the sheets. Angry red scars and love bites marred his skin as far as he could see, and the smell inside the room obviously gave away what he had been doing before the two Frenchmen's arrival.

"More than France, this looks like a prostitute to me," The General rudely offered his piece of mind.

"*Napoléon Bonaparte*," France greeted annoyed. "Philippe, I asked you for peace and you brought me a General?"

"Asking to stop our military expansion is not really what I would expect from France," Philippe admitted quietly, his eyes staring uncertainly down at his feet.

"England said that as well," France agreed with a sigh, turning to give his back to the two Frenchmen. "Behead me, if you like. I already lost my head once today."

Philippe sighed out loud at France's remonstrations, while Napoleon just stared surprised at the nation who had always appeared to him strong and unbreakable.

"Did Great Britain fuck your brain out?" Napoleon asked annoyed, earning France's growl as he turned towards him just enough to glare at him.

"Unfortunately, he did not!" France countered, eventually deciding to sit up so that the devastation on his chest would be quite visible to all the people in the room. "No war ever managed to do this to my beautiful body! France not winning and getting badly injured is something unheard of!"

Napoleon studied the proud nation in front of himself, realising for the first time how weak and tired he looked. In his soldier's mind, the fact that France could be killed but wouldn't actually die was just an added bonus. It had never crossed his mind that it would be a devastating experience for the other Frenchman, especially considering that it had come not only from his own children, but also from his own side.

That consideration allowed him to place quite a different meaning to France's babbling about peace.



"You don't want to fight because you think you can't win, then." He decided eventually, analysing attentively France's reactions to his words.

"I can barely stand up, *Napoléon*," France admitted weakly, shame now showing in his eyes as he realised how bad he must look to his friends. He had forgotten that he had even deeply shocked England, the nation that thought that telling his children the stories of Mother Goose was a fine way to make them sleep. "I'm not this. I'm France, the beautiful France."

"I can make you beautiful again." Napoleon proposed, closing the space between him and his nation. "I can make you win again. Just don't ask us to stop the expansion now, and I promise that I'll give you the power that's rightfully ours."

Napoleon had seemingly caught his nation's interest, still France seemed hesitant to agree with the General out of a simple chance. It wasn't only the nation himself, all his children were also tired from the recent events, and France wasn't used to start a war knowing he would have no chance to get through it.

"We're already fighting with England... If we keep going like this and reinforce our offensive power against him and the rest of Europe instead of retreating, he might even declare a full war on us... Currently, this would mean annexation," France pointed out gravely. "He is serious about it this time, and our army can't stop him. I don't honestly think that I can stop him—"

"Lovers' spat?" Napoleon asked curiously, unsettled by France's plain assumptions of defeat.

"It's what we do, nothing out of the ordinary," France explained, even though his eyes automatically lowered to stare at his own hands, currently resting in his lap. "Seeing me dying, however, sent him out of control. I can't plead him to leave us our freedom after what happened today..."

"Destroying France... wouldn't that mean destroying *you*?"

France refused to answer and tucked himself once again under the sheets, giving his back to his friends in a vain hope to close up the topic.

"Still, you let him fuck you!" Napoleon concluded instead, shaking his head in disappointment. "It's like you already decided for us that our place is beneath the British Empire..."

"I fuck him just as much, if not more!" France protested with rage, annoyed by the way the General was attempting to portray him. "And if you think that bottoming makes you the weaker of the two in a relationship, know that I pity you."

"France..." Napoleon sighed, realising that he had honestly said a stupid thing. He knelt at the side of France's bed and placed a caring hand on his bare shoulder, unsure about how to get his nation's approval. "Let me help you the only way I know. I'm sorry that I talked down on you, I acted no better than Robespierre did."

France didn't move at first, but then he turned once again to stare at the two Frenchmen, propping himself up on one elbow.

"You can have it your way, if my people so decide." France answered, eventually letting himself fall down on his back exhausted, his eyes gazing up unfocused at the ceiling. "The worst that can happen is having to survive England's dinner for a while, I suppose."

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In the end, all the three Frenchmen were, in their own way, right and at the same time wrong.

France had managed to actually rise back from his ashes, first thanks to the more moderate regime Philippe had helped set up, and then through Napoleon's military successes. It didn't last, however, and as the target was set on England –the British Empire and his allies had crushed Napoleon, and France with him.

It had been a quite refreshing experience for both lovers, in all honesty, since it was more akin to how they had always lived until then, far from the horrors of the revolutions and from the way their personal life had lately mingled too much with their foreign policy.

England had been glad to hear once again France's arrogant bite-backs, and France had been glad to find himself strong enough not only to actually stand up, but also to submit Europe to his domain and to fend off England's bows.

Even though he was still hurting from the scars of his revolution and the sound defeat had just made them worse, after his defeat France had been closed up in a cell while Great Britain and his allies decided his future.

"France? We reached a decision," England announced after the meeting, as he entered France's cold cell.

Looking around, however, he couldn't see his lover anywhere.

"France?" He called once again.

A groan of pain made him giving his attention to one of the corners of the room, allowing him to notice his lover laying there in a foetal position.

"France!" England yelled in panic, rushing at his side. "We didn't hurt you this badly, we just freed the others! What the hell is happening to you!?"

He knelt next to him and scooped him in his arms, noticing him grimace in pain as he made him resting more comfortably with his head against his biceps. As he brushed some strands of hair away from his forehead, however, he felt his lover burning under his touch.

"What the hell...?" England whispered, letting France go to run back to the door and yell for Belgium to bring cold water, some towels and a doctor. Then, he retrieved the blanket from

the bench inside the cell and went back to France, enveloping him into the warm wool as he cuddled him once again in his arms.

"Talk to me, love," England pleaded quietly, checking once again his temperature.

"I believed him, England," France answered him, despite gritting his teeth and breathing short breaths because of the coldness he was feeling. "And he led me towards power and victory, as he promised... But I gave away what I had become for it."

He curled into England's warm embrace desperately searching for comfort.

"What am I, England?" France whimpered in his lover's chest. "I'm not a Republic, I'm not a Monarchy. I'm not a father, I'm not a husband—"

"Politically speaking I can answer, since they didn't allow me to annex you," England told him gently, rocking him slightly as he caressed his hair kindly. "For the time being you will be a Monarchy, the next of your kings will be waiting for you in Paris."

France allowed a soft sob to leave his lips, both at the news and at the physical pain that he was feeling.

"As for our family situation..." England continued, however. "I'll always be here for you; no matter if we're not married or if we're still two separate nations. And the kids are missing you... They can't wait to stay at your place for some time, even though you can't say that you are their father."

"I want more," France pleaded, for the first time in his life giving up any pretence that he was fine with the rules and obligations that came with being a nation. "I want you to be more in my house, I want to be certain that you will stop bothering the kids and that the reason will be quite obvious for everyone... You can't make Canada fight America."

England heard France's words, feeling more than just a little surprised. He had been the first one attempting to push France to ignore rules and just have the nice family he had dreamed about become reality. He had always guessed France didn't care about it as much as he did... But maybe he really had understood it all wrong.

No matter how much the French nation talked, he had always been quite difficult to figure out, his words more often than not plain lies or truths masked as lies. Or lies masked as truths. Apparently, what England had thought was France's honest opinion on how they were supposed to behave were all lies. Lies France was telling to himself, first and foremost, in a desperate attempt to protect not only himself, but also England and their kids from the rest of the world. He had always accused France not to understand his feelings, but maybe the problem was that France understood them much more than he thought, sharing most of them.

"You could have bloody well told me this before, France," England told him eventually, his voice kind but slightly breaking. "You knew from the beginning that I wanted you and the kids inside my home."

"Then take me!" France cried out in pain, almost hysterical. "I cannot stand this... You promised me you would annex me, why aren't you doing it?"

"France... I love you too much to actually do that, no matter what I say when I get angry!" England countered, hoping that his words could somehow reach France despite the nerves and the fever. "We all think that you are not much to blame for this mess, we couldn't be more lenient than this."

"Just keep your bloody pity!" France growled in anger, attempting to free himself from England's hold.

"It's not pity, you idiot! You are a strong nation, France!" England pointed out, tightening his grip on his lover to stop his attempts at getting free. "I myself don't believe that I can keep you in my house for long. It would be a lot of trouble to go through for us, to get nothing back."

"I know, but I can't stand how things are anymore. This last war was too much... Being your enemy is becoming too difficult for me to stand..."

"France" England whispered in his ear, taking his chance to leave a gentle kiss on his cheek. "I feel the same uneasiness, but you know that's the fever talking now, right?"

"*Va chier, mon amour*," France bit back, curling even more in England's arms despite the spite words. "Just because being enemies and keeping our interests separate has always been fine with us until now, it doesn't mean that it *needs* to stay like that."

"You are the one who kept saying that you didn't mind and that it was how the things are supposed to go between nations," England pointed out quietly, ignoring France's insults altogether. "You're just tired from this Republic thing, love. A bit of monarchy will give you enough calm to finally rest."

"It's not just that, *Angleterre*. You set the kids one against one another... Are they condemned to be like us?" France asked, his eyes watering as he looked up to stare at England. "I hoped Beltane would bring good things..."

"War doesn't mean we love one another less, you said that yourself" England remembered him plainly, caressing his hair to reassure him. "C'mon, I'll tell the kids to come to Europe to see you, so you can watch for yourself how they are doing. You barely left the continent these last years, they are both desperate to see you too."

"This is the worse poison I could ever be infected with," France whimpered, his voice so plain and low to appear mad. "Love and freedom."

"It will get better, I promise," England countered, leaving a soft kiss on his forehead. "Just do as I say for a little while. You said it yourself, dominion can be realised in many ways."

France was too tired to protest, so he just cried all the tears he had and soon fell asleep into England's caring embrace.

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The restoration of the monarchy in France did not last much, since Napoleon went back from his exile and the king escaped once again.

It was only after the definitive defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo that a more stable monarchy returned to France, uncaring of the French nation's opinion on the matter.

It lasted from 1815 to 1848, though, enough time to help France go back to his self-loving person. The restoration, in fact, was lived as an ill period for France and England, mostly because of the older nation's ongoing bad health issues. Because of all of that France, who had been granted his own room back to the palace, rarely left it.

Seeing their nation so lacking in determination, the French monarchy thought he was missing Napoleon's rule, but in fact, what he was really missing was a proper way to understand himself.

England was at his side whenever he could and so were America and Canada; most afternoons passed with France laying on his royal bed sandwiched between his sons, Canada's still teenager form cuddling quietly to his left and America loudly explaining and asking things while clutched tightly to his right. Those afternoons, England could only listen to them, laying at the feet of the large bed and wondering what he had done wrong and where things had begun turning upside-down.

Slowly, England began losing faith in what he had always told France, and he himself attempted to put in place some drastic changes in his country that reflected the more democratic spirit in the air. He applied them to make the monarchy survive, since he held no trust into republics and democracies, but his choices still set an example for France.

As his lover used rationality to sort through the liberal thoughts that had been bothering him since the Revolution, France himself started to get better.

It was during this period that England decided to make a proposition to France that he really hoped they would not regret. They were alone in France's rooms, currently organised as something more akin to an apartment than just a bedroom and a living room. That had been one of the many ways the monarchy was attempting to win France back... without much success, if England had to be honest about it.

"Hey, France, I need to talk to you about something," England blurted out eventually, staring from the sofa in the living room to the small kitchenette, where France was currently making them tea.

"Your share of Canada eventually merged with the one that's still culturally mine?" France questioned curiously, having just bid goodbye to his worried son. "I knew that all of it was just one of your nasty plans to erase my beautiful language from North America!"

“What? I did nothing, they are merging on their own! And no one is honestly attempting to erase French as a language, that was just Canada over-fearing things!” England countered, pouting and blushing a deep scarlet in embarrassment. “Besides, he is our son and one single being, how was he thinking that would turn out?”

France chuckled at England's annoyance and sat down on the sofa next to him, as he placed a cup of tea each on the table. England groaned at France's reaction, realising that his lover was just plainly teasing him, and took his cup of tea to sip it quietly. France did the same as he leaned against his lover, his head brushing lightly against England's.

“Well then? What did you want to tell me?” France asked cheerfully after a while.

England finished sipping his tea and put back down on the coffee table his cup before inhaling deeply.

“I went to meet the cute little girl you mentioned,” he announced quietly. “You know, from the territories I took from you in 1814?”

“Uhm? Seychelles, you mean?” France asked worriedly, putting down his own cup of tea on the table, despite it being still half-full, in order to turn towards England and properly observe his lover. “How is she?”

“She misses you,” England said, sighing deeply and turning to stare at himself at France in the eyes. “Because of the Revolution you rarely went back to visit her since your pirate days.”

France blushed in shame and sat back properly, staring guiltily down at his hands.

“I really didn't want her to see me covered in scars and wounds,” France admitted. “She has always looked up at me like I was her saviour or something like that, I wanted to maintain a bit of dignity, at least in her eyes...”

“You are completely healed now, though,” England pointed out. “Aside very few less visible scars everything else has finally disappeared. Also the cut of the guillotine is basically vanished.”

“You are right,” France agreed, one of his hands reaching around his own neck almost instinctively. “I just need the courage to start again, I guess.”

“I think the same thing,” England offered, taking France's hand in his. “I might be able to help you with this, even though lately I've basically ordered you what politics to follow...”

“*Angleterre?*” France asked curiously, not understanding what his lover's plan was and where did Seychelles fit into all this. “*Mon amour*, listen, she already hates you for taking her from me-” France began saying, only to be interrupted by his lover.

“Let's adopt her!” England hurried to say, making France staring shocked at him.

“What?”

"Listen, she's no different from Canada language-wise and historically speaking... well, officially, since she actually speaks more French than English," England explained in an embarrassed rush, "she's far from both of us and alone... If we adopt her, even if she's in my house, it would be easier for you to see her..."

"I'm an Empire, I'm not scared about being hated," England continued, staring down at his hands unsurely. "But I can't stand watching her so melancholic thinking about you, and I certainly can't stand watching you hiding away from the world. I never wanted to destroy you France, I like the way you keep messing around the world without any sense of rationality and self-preservation."

"Well, now," France protested, unsure about how to take England's far too honest words about him.

France had to admit that he didn't have much to say against England's reasons to adopt her: after all, he already was a sort of father-like figure to the young girl; about the annexation to the British Empire in itself, he'd had quite a lot of mixed feelings at the time. He had been too weak back then to prevent the annexation, however, so saying something now would be useless, especially not now that England had offered them a solution.

A personal solution that like many others was somehow beginning to have impact in the world panorama. Lately, their foreign policy was becoming slowly but inexorably a mess, so much that some of the other nations still couldn't understand which were France's colonies, which were England's and which were dominions over which neither of them had yet to make a formal claim.

Also changes in ownership between France and England weren't uncommon, contributing to the general idea that more than colonies taken by France or England in particular, those were just territories to be left alone so not to run into the crossfire of an Anglo-French spat.

France sighed at the thought and admitted to himself that the matter of changing ownership wasn't an actual problem after all, therefore he'd better focus on the real matter at hand.

"What does she think about it?" He asked England, despite easily guessing his answer.

"She said that she hates me, but also that she really wants to see you," England answered matter-of-factly, shaking his shoulders nonchalantly. "So do the boys, France," he added sadly.

"They come and go quite often," France countered, moving his gaze to stare at his side, away from England's accusatory one.

"But they are always just visiting," England countered plainly, "it would be nicer having a more stable routine, something we all could call home... something like what we had in the New World."

France sighed and looked pensively at the room they were in. Since the restoration, he had never really felt the opulent rooms as his own, but he had also felt it would be just stupid to try changing things; France still was bound to obey the rules England and his allies had set on

him after Waterloo, and he had no real strength to risk shouldering the consequences that defying those orders might entail... At least, not until that moment.

How hilarious was it that it was the very same Great Britain the one giving him leeway to disobey his orders. Had he overthought things, and actually trapping him in this pretence of monarchy had never really been England's intention?

"I've been thinking about getting an apartment in Paris," France told England eventually, before turning back towards him with a big smile. "I'll make certain that there will be enough room for everyone."

"Is that a yes, then?" England asked, unsure about how to take his lover's words.

"More than just a yes, *mon petit lapin*," France reassured him, tugging England towards him until he was forced to sit on France's legs. "I'll send Pierre to Canada to reassure him that he doesn't risk losing his French heritage, and then I'll sign up for that apartment. Will you meet me at Seychelles' when I'll go over there to bring her to France?"

England laughed at his words and then hugged France tightly, glad that everything was going on well.

"Of course, my love," He answered him in between his laughs. "After two boys, I can't wait to add a little girl to the family."

They separated just enough to allow their lips to finally meet in a searing kiss, before they parted once again to stare into each other's eyes.

"Won't your other colonies get jealous of the different treatment you allow her?" France asked England, unsure about what consequences their choices would have into the world setting.

"She's really alone over there," England explained, his reassuring manners calming France too. "And you miss her too, don't you? Even though she's not really *ours*, she has a lot of the both of us, more than any other domain we might share."

"You hope to bring together America and Canada once again as well, don't you?" France asked, allowing his hand to caress England's jaw. "Being set one against the other must have hurt them more than just a bit, even though they never talked to me about that."

"America is independent, now, but he still feels like the younger brother out of them. Canada feels alone and confused..." England attempted to explain, only to end his sentence with a deep sigh. "We need you France."

"You need me to tell them apart, since you keep mixing them up," France said, before bursting in pearls of laughter, "and they still appear to be a different in age. Just wait until Canada grows up, it will just get worse!"

"France!" England yelled in protest, taking his chance to hit France on his head. However, he only earned France laughing even more at his expenses.



“I think it's time to show everyone what the French Republic can do,” France told him proudly, before closing once again the space between their lips to kiss his lover hard. “We'll be fine, you will see.”

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France was waiting on Seychelles' shore for the arrival of the British ship that was supposed to bring England to them.

It had really been a lot of time since he had personally been on those islands, but he was glad to still hear around him French and French-based languages. That reassured him that his hegemony would continue unchanged, despite England's political dominion over Seychelles.

As a lover, he trusted England to keep ruling well the country of their newly adopted girl. As a nation, as long as his interests were secured, actual political control wasn't really necessary.

Really, they had their own colonies and dominions but, as a general way of action, getting actual political control lacked finesse. England still had a long way to go before he could understand the less bothering and more profitable way to behave in foreign policy.

“Fraaaaaance~!!!” A young voice yelled from the depth of the forest behind him, making him turn to see who had been calling him. “You came back!!”

“*Ma chérie!*” France happily greeted Seychelles, hugging her tightly before offering her a small bouquet of roses and daisies. “Sorry for the delay, I bring you a little present as a token of my devotion~”

“Only you can make flowers survive until they get here,” She reprimanded him, taking the bouquet and blushing scarlet as she took a deep sniff at the flowers. “They are beautiful.”

“Not as much as you,” France offered, ruffling her hair affectionately.

She had really grown since the last time he had seen her, England wasn't joking about it. The small and scared child had turned into a cheerful teen with big brown eyes shining with desire to know more about what was around her. He was also glad to notice that she had kept tightening her hair in two low ponytails the way he had taught her when they had first met, hoping to stop her hair turning into a tangled mess as she ran free on her island or took a swim in the sea.

France was used to praise men and women alike, but the compliments he had offered Seychelles were really all well-earned.

“I missed you,” Seychelles admitted eventually, her embarrassed eyes searching for France's.

“I missed you too,” France murmured, feeling a bit scared to be heading there with their chat. “Are you ready to come back with us when England comes?”

Seychelles took a deep breath and nodded.

"I want to know more, and from here I really can't do much," She admitted seriously, turning to stare at the big ocean at her side. "I want to grow and become a proper nation... But more than anything, I want to feel something different from this solitude."

France closed the space between himself and the young girl to hug her tightly.

"Being a nation takes up most of our free time, *mon trésor*, but we need some family time ourselves to keep going like we have to," France told her gently, before tugging Seychelles towards him to make her look at him as he said his last words. "We would be glad to share that time with you too."

"Oh, France!" Seychelles cheered, almost crying as she jumped back in France's arms to hug him tightly. France returned the hug, understanding only then how much he had missed his little girl.

"Am I interrupting?" A well-known voice came from behind France.

"England!" Seychelles welcomed him happily, leaving France's hold to run and hug England too. "I'm glad you came!"

"Am I supposed to believe you?" England teased, returning Seychelles' hug. "It's a long way back to France from here, I thought we could have anticipated at least the first meetings."

Both France and Seychelles looked questioningly at him, and then followed his indication to look at a small boat approaching the shore only that moment. On board, two very identical nations - despite their different apparent age - waved happily back at them.

"Oooiiii~!" America yelled at them overenthusiastically.

"You brought the boys!" France noticed happily, rushing in their direction to meet them halfway.

"They needed a vacation too," England explained, putting his arm around Seychelles' shoulders. "And they really wanted to meet their new sister!"

Seychelles swallowed hearing England's words, the fear of not being accepted stronger than she would have ever thought possible.

"They really look like you two," she noticed worriedly, jumping backwards as she noticed America rushing towards her.

"Ohi there! I'm America, the world's coolest nation!" America told her as soon as he had freed himself from France's hug and managed to reach her. "I can also be the coolest brother, just ask Canada!"

England, France and Seychelles laughed at his presentation, whilst Canada just raised a patient eyebrow at him.

"I would say the noisiest," Canada offered instead, smirking mischievously at his brother before turning to Seychelles and smile kindly at her. "I'm Canada, pleased to meet you."

Seychelles laughed at the two older nations antics and offered them an elegant bow.

"I'm Seychelles, please take care of me~"

The whole family was enchanted by the girl's courtesy, France even more so than the others were since he fell in a pool of dramatic nose blood and tears.

"France..." England reprimanded his lover and he looked at him attempting to recompose himself.

"I taught her so well..." France said on the other hand, drying dramatic tears from the corner of his eye. "*Papa* is so proud, *ma chérie*~"

America stared for some time first at Canada and then at Seychelles, as he evaluated attentively France's words, particularly the ones he didn't understand but apparently the rest of his family did. When he reached his conclusion, he just sighed aloud.

"I fear this family just got even more complicated," he concluded, hoping that French was the only risk he was exposing himself to after the new addition to their family.

The voyage towards France, however, proved true to America's prediction of disaster.

Canada and Seychelles hit off on the spot and made plain use of their shared knowledge of French to bother their brother, who was however quite glad to have something different from his internal problems to take care of at the moment.

As they stared at America running after Canada and Seychelles through the whole ship, their parents could only watch them proudly. England put his arm around France's waist and snuggled against him, his head resting against the crook of his neck as their chests pressed together.

"It has been a while since I've seen them laughing like this, I was getting worried," England confessed, feeling at ease for the first time in years.

France closed both his arms around him and held him closer to him, in order to shield him from the cool gusts of wind that reached them and to feel more of his lover against him.

"I'm sorry, *mon cher*, I really made a mess of things." France apologised, letting his head rest against England's. "First I destroyed our family and then also myself..."

"You were right, however. I'm just too slow at catching up."

"I'm used to setting a trend," France took his chance to point out, allowing himself a light chuckle. "But it is *you* who usually gives me good ideas..."

England stared up surprised at him, blushing heavily as France kissed him on the tip of his nose.

"I always looked up at you..." England admitted shyly, swallowing uncomfortably. "I always wanted to reach you, to become like you."

"Likewise, *mon amour*," France confessed with a sweet smile on his lips. "I always looked up to you... even when you were just a child nation scared of everything –and especially of me– there was something that led me straight to you. Something that made me wish I could be better to be enough for you..."

"France," England pleaded, offering his lips to his lover with a silent gesture. Their lips met naturally, in a soft lip-bruising kiss that attempted to express in a soft brush of skin all the expectations they had placed on one another during those years.

When France attempted to deepen it, however, a loudly whining America pushed between them, forcefully taking England's place into France's arms.

"Mooom, please, help! Canada and Seychelles keep talking to me in French!" America cried desperately.

Both England and France stared shocked at America, attempting to understand what their son meant. France, however, tightened automatically his arms around him and began petting his hair reassuringly.

"He said that I couldn't be a superhero because I'm female!" Seychelles protested heatedly, running to meet the rest of their family together with Canada. "I just showed him my superpowers: incomprehensible but charming language beam~!"

Seychelles' evil grin was one for the records, comparable just to France's when he was about to get revenge on someone speaking badly about his cuisine and England's before attempting to hit someone with a curse.

It made a shaking contrast with the angelic smile Canada was sporting, as he stood at her side plainly affecting his calm and peaceful attitude.

"I just helped," He admitted in a soft voice, looking like the most innocent nation in the whole world.

"Mooom!! Teach me French!" America cried louder, feeling ignored for too long. "Please!"

Even though his pale blue eyes were soon filled with desperate tears, America earned only France's discomfited stare on him, as the older nation scratched dubiously the back of his head.

"My love, you are quite refractory to French..." France attempted to explain him quietly. "I can do almost everything, but even I can't make miracles."

"And here I wondered where America's self-centredness came from," England took his chance to point out, rising a dubious eyebrow to his lover.

"Says the nation who owns half the world..." France countered annoyed, glaring back at England.

“But I want to be the number one, mom, pleaseee!” America protested, attempting to gain back his parents' attention on his current problem. “A hero can't have weak points”

“What about trying Spanish, I’m certain uncle Spain would help you,” France proposed kindly, already pitying his friend for what he was about to make him endure. “It will be your counter-power!”

“Really?” America told him with big hopeful eyes, his desperate crying tuned down to a weak sniffing.

“Of course, my darling," France reassured him, despite being everything except sure that his suggestion would actually help America against his brother and sister.

Therefore, America set off to learn Spanish.

Despite his proficiency, it wasn't enough to contrast Canada and Seychelles’ evil French speaking double.

It *was* enough, however, to get Spain the worst migraine of his life after that infamous time when he had dared to punish South Italy by forbidding him to eat his beloved tomatoes.

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**T.B.C.**

## La Liberté éclairant le monde

Seychelles' addition to their family had really been like a gust of fresh air, bringing the dysfunctional family the innocence of someone old enough to know the pains of life but young enough to maintain the will to change things.

And changing things was actually something they had needed.

France was glad to have his family in a place that he could call his own for the first time, and took this chance to spoil his kids and lover with food and sweets, despite England's continuous remonstrations that even nations could get toothache. It was not just the different setting brought by the new apartment –it was actually the whole Paris that was slowly starting to understand itself once again after the physical and psychological devastations brought on by the Terror.

France was *proud* of his people, proud that they had found in themselves the courage to start again, and loved the idea of showing it properly to his family; England hadn't been wrong in saying that visiting and appearing as an actual family was something completely different, and France could now see the difference in front of his eyes.

France couldn't get enough of watching Seychelles' eyes growing larger at seeing the *Seine* for the first time, or hearing America's surprised words while admiring the finally finished *Arc de Triomphe*, or Canada's desperate attempts to show to the Parisians that he too was able to speak French –no matter what their thoughts about it were. It really was something different from what had become their routine until then, allowing France and England to finally perceive themselves as parents once more.

Their kids had grown and they had just adopted a new one, of course, but the deep satisfaction they felt watching them lazily enjoying Paris was something they had feared they would not have the chance to feel anymore. Also America, Canada and Seychelles had apparently needed to act more like themselves than just nations with orders and rules to follow.

It was eventually one evening during dinner that America felt the need to address one of their current situation's sore points.

“Mom? When we go back home, will all of this end once again?”

France noticed only then that, instead of eating, America was nervously cutting some bread and the meatloaf on his plate in square pieces before sandwiching the meat amongst two squares of bread and therefore turning the French dish into tiny hamburgers.

“Why should it, sweetheart?” France asked worriedly, attempting to focus more on his son's desperation than on the devastation he was bringing onto his innocent food.

“Well, Seychelles will have to go back to her home and she really is far away from all of us... When we are not together as a family, I can still count on Canada and you on dad, but she'll

be once again alone," America explained sadly. "Will all of this disappear? Will we risk to end up going to war against her too, eventually?"

"America..." England sighed, taking his chance to ruffle his son's hair with warm affection. "Have a bit of trust in your parents, will you? Dad will do his best to make it peaceful for a little while longer..."

"Will you really?" America asked hopeful.

"I'll do my best, I bet everyone would like peace," England assured, smiling kindly. "What about you two?" He then added, looking back at Canada and Seychelles.

"I don't like war, especially when it is against my brother," Canada took his chance to point out, with much more determination England would have liked. "Peace would be *très bien*."

Seychelles nodded at Canada's last words. "If there's peace we can see one another more often, after all. Also travelling long distances won't be a problem anymore!"

"Yeah, and we won't risk hurting one another," Canada continued after her, smiling at Seychelles, who was quick to return the small gesture.

"Won't you be happier without me around?" America asked his brother and sister, sounding sincerely curious. He only earned Canada and Seychelles' laughter for his trouble.

"How could we live without you making trouble for us?" Canada offered, looking like the epitome of sweetness despite his teasing words.

"Why you!" America countered, blushing heavily and making everyone else laugh at his distress.

"Don't fight, my darlings," France told them eventually, moving to walk between America and Canada to give them a quick hug before caressing kindly Seychelles' head. "I have finally a place where we can be together in Paris, then there's England's home and we both still have residences in the new world. We certainly don't lack places to stay together for a weekend or two!"

"My home is open to everyone too!!" America hastened to add, his eyes shining with determination. "I'm still working on it, but it will be fine soon! I swear!"

"My home is available as well," Seychelles added. "It's not much, but it is welcoming... We could also have a trip to the seaside, it's much warmer than here!"

"Speaking of trips..." France offered his family proudly, straightening up his back to stare at all of them better. "Since tomorrow is the last day you will be here, I planned a trip to the countryside!"

Despite his expectations, the announcement was received by his kids with only a bored stare and by his lover with sheer confusion.

“What's fun about the countryside? I like the modern constructions in Paris better~” America whined, finally resuming eating once again his mini hamburgers now turned cold. “Men are made to live in cities!”

“People are made to live by the seaside, it's far more relaxing than chaotic cities,” Seychelles countered, despite starting to eat her dinner properly once again with America's same nonchalance.

“People are made to live in cold weather –it makes you wiser,” Canada offered his own piece of mind, he himself resuming eating quietly.

England listened to his children's opinions with interest before uttering his own.

“I quite agree with Canada,” He simply said, crushing his lover's hopes as he too gave his attention back to his dinner.

France stared at his family mouth gaping and put his hands on his hips, shaking his head in resignation.

“What kind of family have we got?” He whispered reproachfully, deciding to just go and get the dessert he had left back in the kitchen.

“C'mon France, you can't really pretend we all like your green meadows and rich lands,” England countered quietly, taking a sip of his wine. “Besides, you use up most of them just to make wine...”

“Oh, well, *mon trésor*,” France answered him, an evil smile on his lips. “I had the impression that you liked my *rich lands* and the *wine* I get from it.”

“Mum!!!” America and Canada yelled back at France in shock, as Seychelles blushed a deep scarlet and England spat all the wine he still had in his mouth back in his glass. While his lover coughed desperately, France just busted in a loud laughter that earned him an eyeroll from all of his kids.

Admittedly, France had completely missed the family life.

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Despite the rest of the family's initial remonstrations, France's planned trip was a success. The violet lavender landscape of Provence was stunning enough to leave without words even the cities-loving America.

While the kids teased one another running amongst the good smelling meadows, England and France took their time to arrange the set up for their picnic on a small hill under a very old tree.

“You really choose the place well, France,” England admitted eventually. “It's stunning.”



"If I ever need to conquer the heart of someone, my beautiful Provence is the obvious choice," France teased, looking back at England from under his long eyelashes.

"Oh, really? Do I need to be jealous?" England teased back, as he put on the blanket the finely decorated patisserie France had prepared the day before for their picnic. The amount of cream they were covered in made them way more suitable for the refined rooms of the royal palace rather than for a family picnic to the countryside, but knowing France it was to be expected.

"You tell me..." France leered, closing the space between them sensually; his lips only a few inches from England's ear. "Is it working?"

Despite the cold shivers his lover's words made him feel, England answered him playfully by stuffing France's half-open mouth with one of the small cakes he was arranging, only to turn to stare with pretentious nonchalance at the kids playing in front of them as soon as he had completed his mischievous task.

"Obviously, it isn't," England declared haughtily, barely stealing a glance in France's direction to survey his reaction through the corner of his eye.

France swallowed the cake and took away the excess of cream from his lips with his thumb, smirking evilly at his lover.

"Are you certain, *mon amour*?" France questioned the younger nation.

"Of course. Why would I appreciate something belonging to you?" England countered, before he found himself swept away by France's deep kiss without many questions or preambles.

He tasted sweet, extremely so, and England couldn't do much to resist him and the tempting teasing of his tongue against his. When they eventually parted, France took his chance to smear England's lips with the excess cream and once again devour his lips with a heated kiss that left his lover eventually moaning and whimpering for more.

France's curious hand made its way to England's groin and with immense satisfaction found him half-hard.

"I think you might need to reconsider your last statement, *mon cher*," France finally declared his victory. "Because it looks like you like either my cuisine or my skills~"

"You bloody son of a—" England yelled back at him, turning crimson in embarrassment as he lashed out against France to beat some sense into him.

France simply laughed at his attempt at revenge and escaped their embrace, rushing to the other side of the tree behind them to avoid England's fists. The younger nation ran after him and they started their own game of run and catch, under the curious and happy stares of their kids, who eventually ran back to their parents to cheer one or the other.

When they noticed their children behaviour, they were quick to reprimand them and make them sit to eat the picnic France had prepared. After that, the afternoon proceeded smoothly, with all the five nations enjoying snacks and playing games together, something that they hadn't really done since before politics began to tear all of them apart.

For France, it had all the features of a new start.

After his family left, France very rarely went back to the royal palace, eventually siding with the rebels when the inevitable turmoil advanced. On 26 February 1848, the Second French Republic was declared, but freedom wasn't a poison to France anymore.

Things were far from getting better, but at least France was strong enough to shoulder everything for his own people. This until the second French empire began, lasting until Prussia got unnerved with his friend and made it collapse, only to have the Third Republic back on the world setting.

During the whole procedure England watched with worry his lover's continuous going back and forth to the Republic, but as France didn't bother him or the others too much he let the complicated nation do as he pleased; he was just glad to see him focused on things again.

Not much on fighting against him though, something that left him free to conquer half of the known world. France got under his control a nice part of it as well, but he reached even farther than England with that infamous cultural dominion of his. Fashion, art, literature, cuisine... everything had Paris as the epicentre of a hurricane of beauty, charm and elaborate perfection that for once hadn't just swept away England, but the entire world. A *Belle Époque* that France cherished and gave life to, but that didn't necessarily mean that France would stop also being a military Empire.

What shocked England the most during that period, to be fair, was how their foreign policy had gradually mixed and degenerated into something akin to a proper alliance. When England had realised for the first time that he and France were actually on the same side it had been in 1853, during the Crimean wars against Russia.

He had noticed the French army next to his own and at first had thought that someone else had borrowed his lover's despicable fashion sense on matter of military uniforms. When he had heard the pretentious accent that only a bloody Frenchman could have, he had begun making a list of former French colonies he might have annexed without paying too much attention. Only when he had seen his lover running from his supposed position to jump over him and molest him shamelessly in front of his men, England finally gave up and came to the conclusion that he *was* actually allied with the blond menace.

How had that even happened? The first answer that came to England's mind was Waterloo, but he had no real will to ask more information about it to France and much less to their respective sovereigns. Sometimes, they were even worse than their nations.

It was nice sharing an alliance, England had his chance to notice, since stealing the French nation from the battlefield when battling on the same side was much easier than having to go through all that bothersome espionage in order to get him from the opposition, no matter how much of a master he had become at doing that. Considering how much of a tease France

could be when fighting, England certainly appreciated anything that sped up his chances to get his lover naked and writhing over him. Or underneath. Or on the side, or whatever.

When the war ended and it seemed that France had taken his chance to go and make friends with Russia, England felt relieved for a grand total of five seconds after the arrival of the news at the British camp. After those had passed, he threw the ale he had been drinking to the other side of the common tent in a fit of jealousy and went on to plan his vendetta against France and Russia.

Just to be on the safe side, England decided to check what was happening in the area of Suez, where France was stupidly dissipating his money, and managed to further complicate an already quite complicated situation. Unfortunately, before he had managed to make the project fail, France had succeeded in offering him some solid arguments to consider joining the Suez project instead of opposing it.

The strength of those arguments was enough to make England actually reconsidering his plan to interfere with France's projects on a simple matter of principle, and opening up to the proper offer along with the adult-themed one. Knowing that he was going to give up on the Suez Canal project, however brought England back to his previous problem: how not to keep allying himself with France and, at the same time, how to prevent France from becoming too friendly with Russia.

Considering that in some points of view the two options were mutually exclusive, England was still plotting a solution when he found himself once again allied with his lover in a war against Mexico—one he hadn't even understood why he was fighting for in the first place. He had some vague memory of saying yes to France at some point, after they had royally smashed themselves with wine and whisky one evening, but except some random words like oil and money, he couldn't really remember much of the discussion.

Luckily for the both of them, the excuse of fighting against Mexico placed them physically near America when his own civil war began the very same year. Unknown to their sovereigns, both France and England made themselves progressively scarce as they gathered information about the American civil war, until one evening they just disappeared from the camp to go and talk with their son.

When they arrived there, what met their eyes was the sight of America crying in pure desperation and physical pain, since the mess happening inside him was currently giving him all the symptoms of a really bad stomach-ache. France felt partially reassured by it, since that was supposed to mean that the civil war would be relatively quick and wouldn't bring any devastating consequence as a result, but it still looked like the younger nation could barely stand it.

It was somewhat obvious too, after all. America was a quite young country, and had been independent for a really short amount of time.

Deciding that for a while their sovereigns might be able to fight a war by themselves, France and England shared a quick glance with one another before going to drag their son up from the floor where he had been curled up around himself and tuck him into his bed. As France

went to search for something edible that America might even be able to keep down, England went to raid the bathroom cabinet of any medicine he deemed useful.

Thanks to their joined efforts, in a couple of days America found himself able to sleep a whole night through. When he woke up, a happy smile found its way on his lips as he noticed France and England asleep on a chair at his bedside, France basically drooling over England, who had fallen asleep in his arms.

It didn't take much to the two older nations to wake and notice that America was finally awake and coherent enough to understand what was happening around him.

"America!" France yelled, almost making England fall from his legs.

"America, how are you?" England asked soon after, attempting to recompose himself and salvage his dignity.

"Thank you for coming, I'm not used to falling ill," America admitted, blushing in shame. "Sorry, I was supposed to manage all on my own..."

"Don't be an idiot like your mother, America," England reprimanded him, earning France's hard stare on him for his words. "We are still family, you should have sent us a message."

"Yeah, *Amérique*," France decided to add, moving to hold his lover from behind despite his bad temper. "Luckily we were in Mexico and— ouch!"

England had shut eloquently France up with an elbow on his stomach and to make the message clearer had turned just enough to glare at his lover.

"Mexico?" America asked, not really understanding what the other nations were talking about.

"Nothing to worry about, my dear, nothing to worry about," England hastened to say, pushing America once again to lie down on his bed and taking his sheets up a bit more to cover him better. "How are you feeling today? Shall we ask mum to make you something?"

"Why bother to ask the only one who knows how to cook since you're both taste blind?" France growled, still massaging his stomach where England had hurt him.

"Because I don't want him poisoned," England admitted plainly, not waiting for France's answer before turning him towards the door and leading him to the kitchen. "We will come back soon!" He added for America with a strained smile, before closing the door behind them and glaring at France.

"What the hell has gotten into you telling him that we are fighting a war so close to him!?" England growled to him as soon as they were alone.

"Why wasn't I supposed to tell him?"

"Maybe because he's fighting a civil war?"

France just stared back at England completely missing the point.

“What’s wrong with it?” He asked eventually, only earning England sighing loudly at him.

“Everything, you war-aholic git!” England explained as he pushed France towards the kitchen. “Best case scenario: he wants to join us, but he can’t because he has his own situation to settle. Worst case scenario: he decides that he has enough of us meddling around him and joins *Mexico*!”

“It’s a quite interesting point of view,” France approved, nodding at his lover’s rock solid logic. “You might be right...”

“I *am* right!” England pointed out as they eventually reached their destination, putting his hands on his hips as he glared back at his lover. “Now, aren’t you going to start on breakfast?”

“Oi, since when I became your chef?” France protested, despite going to open fridge and cupboards to get the ingredients he needed to cook.

“You are French, since when are you bothered by that?”

“Fuck it, America honestly threw away all your tea!” France muttered unnerved as he checked desperately the last cupboard. “I thought that was just a momentary thing”

“Be still my heart, you thought about cooking an English breakfast?” England teased, taking a look at the ingredients France had taken out.

“*Casse toi, Angleterre*, I always make you English breakfast, no matter how sick it makes me in the morning the smell of fried food,” France bit back at England, eventually succeeding in retrieving a couple of forgotten tea bags from the mess that were America’s cupboards. “I’ll do it only for you, however. Until he feels a bit better, he needs something easy to digest. This also means tea and not coffee or milk.”

England allowed himself to smirk back at his lover, finding the way he had riled him up quite endearing against his better judgement.

“I’ll go back to America and check if we need more meds for him,” England offered. “I might go and buy something healthier after breakfast as well.”

“I’ll write you a list then.” France started to prepare breakfast for the three of them. “You will eat downstairs, by the way. I don’t want you to make sick America once again with the smell of all those fried things, I wonder how you can stand it before noon...”

“Yeah yeah.” England, though annoyed, accepted France’s culinary remonstrations and went back to check on their son.

Luckily, America took the prospect of an omelette with vegetables and breakfast tea in the morning without protesting too much, despite the exaggerated amount of plain toasted bread France had added on the side. He would have dared to say that his father had somehow

managed to French the infamous English breakfast, but he wasn't really sure about how either of his parents would have taken the joke.

While England had disappeared to fill America's kitchen with something that wouldn't kill France from hysterics, France laid down next to his son in a way not much different from what they had done when it had been him the one suffering for the derailing of his Revolution. America had promptly curled up in his French father's arms and had enjoyed the proximity for a while, until he had gathered enough courage to ask France how it had felt for him.

France at the beginning had just caressed the soft straight hair of his son, hoping that it would be enough, but then he had capitulated, realising that technically speaking America's civil war was once again his fault.

"What do *you* think, *Amérique*?" France asked eventually. "Every war might look the same to the humans that fight, but each one has a different meaning for us nations."

"I think... I don't know, I never thought too much about it," America confessed. "Freedom is good, though. I still think that it's a great value and that we must pursue it... We *all* must pursue it."

"Are you willing to take a stand against the Confederates, then?" France asked, earning America's big shocked eyes on him.

"Should I take a stand against them? Don't they have the right to say what they want too?" America considered, each second more confused. "Isn't this what freedom is?"

"This might be a bit too philosophical for you, my dear," France countered, sighing deeply as he held his son tighter against himself. "Freedom has to have limits... those which grant everyone their own freedom."

"You mean that... I need to consider also the freedom of the ones that are currently enslaved?"

"I mean that you have to make your own opinion considering the whole setting," France explained better. "What do you value the most? An ethical stand on freedom? An economical stand on opportunity? It would be unfair and quite hypocrite of me telling you *what* to do, I can just explain to you *how* it's usually done."

"Unfair and hypocrite?" America questioned, rising a confused eyebrow to his father. "Why would you be?"

"Because you were right: I keep picking and choosing who I think should be free, no matter what I say and what I believe in. I never act as a matter of principle, and the only time I did it I almost destroyed myself... Maybe I'm not made to be a honest nation..."

"You taught me the value of freedom, though!"

“And it brought you to fight your own blood, *Amérique*. It brought you here, hurting because two different interpretations of freedom are fighting within you,” France pointed out, taking a deep breath before continuing. “England was right, I should have kept you out of this.”

“I—I wouldn’t be myself if you kept me out, mom,” America admitted, hugging France’s waist tight. “Thank you for giving me my most treasured value, no matter the consequences. I’ll find a way to survive through it.”

France answered back America’s hug and kissed him kindly on the top of his head, fighting against his better nature not to cry.

“Thank you, America...”

When England came back, he found his lover and his son sleeping, hugging tightly one another. The scene made him smile, and he sat on the bed to the other side of America to kiss both of them on their forehead. It was a scene so cute that it would be mean to break it, therefore he just laid there, cuddling against America’s back and falling asleep together with them.

During the following days, America had the chance to talk a bit more with France about his current situation, until he finally felt he had all the information he needed to decide on his own. Deeming their work done, England and France said goodbye and good luck to their son and returned quickly to their own war.

When America brought to a conclusion his civil war and noticed the conflict happening in Mexico, England decided to leave the campaign, since he didn't have any intention to once again fight his son on the battlefield; France decided to keep on the war with the rest of their allies, instead, quite interested in testing how America behaved on the battleground as an enemy. That didn’t last long, though, and eventually France decided to give up and leave Mexico be.

Both England and France were happy to notice that, despite the Mexican incident, America didn’t look like he wanted to pursue a proper war against them. Despite their initial fears, it looked like their relationships in the world setting were getting even closer, no matter if America never stopped telling them how cute and interesting the new friend he had made himself while in Asia was.

Japan was a good fellow and England had in time found out many things in common with him, but he didn't look like he enjoyed America's enthusiasm much. Therefore, a deepening of their international relationship was unlikely, in their opinion, unless America decided to officially conquer Japan as his colony, something that wasn't really America's style.

Only when France went back to the Empire and forced his hand on the rest to the world and on his ‘bad’ friend Prussia, did England decide that the proper way to attempt securing that peace he had promised his children was to basically occupy as many lands as he could.

Eventually England - despite his expansionist policy and France’s defeat in the Franco-Prussian wars - managed to really grant everyone a period of relative peace, in which even France’s hedonistic propositions could find their place. Before he could even offer a proper

insult on the matter to his lover, however, the island nation found himself invited to nothing less extravagant than the 1878 universal expo in France.

Much to his dismay, he noticed that his lover had even reserved about a third of the section that wasn't France specifically for him. Somehow, this seemed an offence even worse than joining arms in a common cause or accepting to enter in the Suez Canal project as France's partner. He had no real chance to reflect on what the hell was happening between them, though, since France overenthusiastically dragged him to see what he considered the best piece of his expo: the head of what he had called the *La Liberté éclairant le monde*.

"What the fuck, France, this is pure megalomania!" England couldn't help to point out, his top hat falling down to cover his eyes as his shoulders fell in disbelief at France's dumb idea. "An enormous statue about freedom? I thought you already used up all your money to celebrate your bloody Revolution with that Arc of Triumph!"

"My revolution makes me, *Angleterre*. Something like '*too much has already be done to celebrate it*' isn't in my vocabulary!" France protested heatedly, despite smirking at his lover proudly as he restored England's hat to its proper place and quickly flattened invisible wrinkles over the rest of his dark suit. "This isn't for me, however."

England's blood froze in his veins at the news as stared with big wide eyes at his over-cheerful – and extremely elegant– lover.

"It's not for damn Russia, I hope!" He yelled at France, threatening him with his walking stick, literally seething in rage.

France laughed at England's remonstrations, staved off his face the threatening walking stick with the tip of his gloved index finger and adoringly draped himself around England's arm before answering him.

"Why should I give a present to Russia, you unsophisticated hooligan!" France rebutted with warm affection, winking at him for good measure. "I wanted to give it to America!"

"A- America??" England bellowed, his mouth gaping in shock. "You want to give *this* to *him*?? Why the hell in the whole world history?"

"Why can't I?" France protested, turning slightly to face England properly. "We share the ideals of the Revolution!"

"Which no one of you applies," England countered acidly, this time willingly lowering his hat down his eyes. "My God, like mother like son..."

"C'mon, Angleterre, let me show you my beautiful Expo!" France proposed merrily in the end, taking England's hand in his to drag him around the exposition for as long as they were alone and no one could see them. "There's so much of me and you here that it could be *our* Expo! Wouldn't it be nice actually doing one together one day?"

When they had reached the centre of the large area they were in, France let England's hand go and he rushed enthusiastically forward to another big statue, at the opposite side of the



hall, in front of the completely lost stare of his lover.

Something had certainly changed. There was no doubt about it, because, for some unknown reason, England was honestly beginning to think that France's proposition would have really been a wonderful idea.

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**T.B.C.**

## Cordial intents

As England was desperately attempting to survive the *Belle Époque*, making up for it a counter-style *à la anglais* – something that got regarded by France as a less refined and more ridiculous version of his own, hence the French label– the French nation kept producing stupid ideas that left England bewildered and confused.

The one that made the island nation more worried than usual was his project to revive the Olympics, something that –England had to give him credit– had left even Greece quite surprised.

England had honestly been glad that for once he hadn't been the one having to survive the worst of France's extravagancies, but he knew his lover too well to even think that he could be truly spared; eventually, France had managed to drag thirteen other nations to the first Revival in Athens –England included, despite his best efforts to make his lover and his own sovereigns see reason.

The absurd misconception that he could survive the news was immediately cancelled from his mind the very moment France made his entrance, completely naked, into the Greek stadium.

Was it the first time England had seen France naked? Of course not, that probably dated back to the day after France had toddled towards him the first time they had met, when he had one-sidedly decided that England was dirty and could use a bit of his smelly oils and a change of clothes.

Was it the first time England had seen him parading naked in public? The answer was no once again, since France had taken all the chances he had been granted in his life to strip off of his clothing, both in places that allowed it and in those that did not.

Still, the sight made his brain black out, only to kick-start it again as it was filled with downright impure thoughts the moment France decided to try and get England naked as well. Switzerland had been a lifesaver, but those impure thoughts and the deep-bone feeling that something completely wrong had just happened had kept worrying England to no end, even after France had been forced to dress once again in a loose T-shirt and shorts. Not that it had soothed much of England's uneasiness, truth be told, considering how short France's shorts were in England's opinion.

At the end of the spectacle he had convinced France to stay behind, officially to talk with him about how poorly they both had performed. France had accepted gladly, starting straight away a long speech about how it was the spirit of doing something together and defuse risky political situations what honestly mattered, much more than winning. He was ready to get onto how getting all naked would have reached the purpose even better, since it would have enhanced the spirits and would have metaphorically meant that they nations had stripped of all their reciprocal conflicts, when England decided he had had enough of his lover's bullshit and just kissed him silent.

France gave up his attempt to convince England of his well-meaning reasons to get everyone naked and promptly returned the kiss despite his surprise, taking his time to savour his lover's lips properly before opening his mouth to him and deepening the kiss.

"I don't mind the consolation prize~" France teased as soon as they parted.

"All the others are cheering the winners... You have free use of the stadium, have you realised that?" England offered, blushing slightly. "I thought you might like to take advantage of the situation, considering we did compete with our clothes on, in the end..."

"*Angleterre, mon amour!*" France told him with a big wide smirk. "You didn't seem comfortable with the other option this morning..."

"*You* did, though," England blurted out, sounding extremely embarrassed and quite a lot turned on by the idea. "You should *really* get the chance now that you can."

"If you aren't bothered by it, it's not that pleasurable," France told his lover plainly, sounding like the epitome of innocence and earning England glare on him for that.

"What does that mean!? And here I was thinking—" England's yells got interrupted by France's soft lips on his.

"I honestly appreciated the thought," France explained him as soon as he felt England pliant in his arms. He smirked evilly at him and took his chance to strip himself of his T-shirt before continuing. "You're not going to join me, however, and I don't have a public. I lack honest motives to undress fully~"

"I thought that people who liked that sort of things spoke about '*feeling comfortable with themselves*' or some bullshit like that," England reprimanded France, crossing his arms on his chest.

"Well, yeah, but I'm a rather narcissistic pervert. I'm the kind that does this to be seen and to get a reaction for it!"

"I never had doubts that you were the perverted kind..."

"Then, you know what I need as a reason to undress~" France concluded, staring deep into his lover's green eyes as his hands slipped under the waistband of England's shorts to cup firmly his butt cheeks and allow their groins to grind one against the other.

"I wouldn't mind you giving me a show," England proposed on the same tone, his eyes never leaving France's despite the slight wavering of his voice.

France smirked back at him, pulled his hands away from inside England's pants and shimmed out of his shorts, taking infinite pleasure noticing that England's stare had lowered to follow his movements down to his cock, still at rest but no less alluring to him. Enticed by the prospect, France started running a few laps around the empty stadium with extreme nonchalance.

England swallowed at the sight, finding the thought of someone walking on them more alluring than he felt comfortable with; before he could stop himself, his hand had already found its way inside his shorts to gently stroke his growing erection. He sat down on the warm stands, never taking his eyes away from his lover's gorgeous body moving swiftly on the Greek setting.

France had apparently noticed England's movements and had moved on to more appealing stretching exercises, only vaguely trying to pretend he wasn't doing all that on purpose. England found himself not caring much about it, however, and he licked his lips at the erotic show as his hand quickened its pace.

The display apparently went both ways, because it was soon apparent that even France was affected by the whole ordeal, probably getting excited by both the situation and England's reaction to it. The French nation never stopped his exercises, though, sending shivers down England's back as his eyes followed every motion, noticing the way his erection hardened slowly.

How would it feel being taken right there on the stands? How would it feel if their friends—or even worse, one of their kids—decided to go searching for them and found them pleasing one another out in the open?

England's sight slightly blurred as his other hand reached beneath the soft cotton on his T-shirt to tease his nipples and caress his chest, in an imprecise mimicking of how France touched him whenever they were making love to one another.

The sight in front of him, the warmth seeping through the thin layer of cotton of his shorts from the stands under him and the hot, dry breeze caressing gently his skin, soon sent him right over the edge. As he was coming down from his high, he felt France's slightly erratic breathing teasing the side of his neck he had left exposed.

"Switzerland certainly was onto something when he insisted to do this clothed, seeing how you reacted to it," he whispered against his skin, lightly kissing it as he worked furiously on his own hardness.

"France..." England moaned quite sleepily, as one of his hands went to help France with his own erection and the other went to tease his hard nipples. France moaned, feeling England's touch on his heated and sweaty skin, and attempted to cuddle even more against his lover, needing his proximity more than he needed air now that the show was long forgotten.

It didn't take France much longer to come with a strangled cry against England's mouth, as they kissed hungrily and desperately, completely uncaring of the place they were in. When he was spent, he took England tight in his arms, enjoying the warmth of his body as much as the nice feeling of the sun warming his naked skin.

England was feeling just about ready to fall asleep like that, safe in his lover's arms, when France's chuckle got his attention back on him.

"You know, it would have been hilarious if someone had walked in on us," France offered cheerfully, noticing England's sleepy stare on him.

“Embarrassing, I would say,” England countered annoyed. “It’s fine as a fantasy, but I wouldn’t even get hard if I honestly thought that someone had an actual chance to see us loving one another...”

“Would they even think that we were making love?” France asked, the light tone of his voice irritating England.

“What do you mean? You are *my* lover, we just fuck with one another!”

“But no one *knows* that,” France pointed out. “If they saw you masturbating and me running laps naked, they probably would never even think that the two things were related...”

“If they found me fucking you or vice versa, on the other hand...” the older nation continued, while he pressed a flurry of tiny, teasing kisses down England’s neck to his shoulders. “They would have either thought that we were fighting in some creative way, or that it held no particular meaning to us... They might have even offered themselves up for an orgy!”

The mental image his own words had evoked made France burst in peals of laughter, making him unaware of the way England’s eyes snapped open in shock and his heart missed more than just a couple of beats out of sheer panic.

“France, get your clothes! You’re having a shower right now!” England ordered his lover as he disentangled from him and stood up, his grip tightened hardly around France’s wrist.

“Are you getting jealous just at the idea?” France teased, his smirk however dying on his lips as he saw England’s cold glare on him. “It was just a joke, *Angleterre*. You are aware of it, *non?*”

“I know, but I need to think for a while about it while you’re properly dressed.” England concluded sharply, dragging a confused France towards the showers.

France decided to stop attempting to reason with England and simply followed his lover, allowing the thoughts of the island nation to go down a quite dangerous path. The point was that France had been right: no one would ever think that they had just caught them being intimate with one another, any other nation would have just assumed that it was a simple expression of hate or something void of meaning. The sole thought made his heart break.

Why would they even think anything different, after all? England himself felt something completely out of the ordinary the few times they had joined their efforts in a war or in France’s weird projects, why would it be any different for someone who had never seen the two of them kissing or even sharing a kind word with one another?

He didn’t think much of France’s egocentric quirks because he knew that, no matter how much of an exhibitionist his lover was, his heart had been his for the longest time. This assurance, however, was just his and –hopefully– France’s.

People might try something with either of them and what would the other have for show? Not a ring, not an alliance... not even the promise that they had sworn devotion only to one another, now that England allowed himself to think about it. Were they even boyfriends? He

was certain that some of their sovereigns and their human friends rightfully thought of them as such, but they had never talked openly to one another about that.

He'd had some doubts about his relationship with France during the Romanticism, honestly, but he had been personally more interested in wars and political disputes at the time, leaving everything artistic to his lover to enjoy and tamper by himself. Something needed to be done before things got out of control and France's predictions of disaster realised themselves.

Something needed to be done... He only had his sovereigns and his people to persuade.

Bloody hell.

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France followed up by building even more big structures, like the thing he had called the *Tour Eiffel* –and thank lord America had renamed the other one *Statue of Liberty*– and expanding his cultural and colonial influence.

England, on the other hand, kept working on his colonies and on his strategy to make as many states he could economical dependent towards him. He also strategically included France in his plans or did his best not to crash directly against the French Empire.

Both nations' policies were working quite well, so much that very few nations now thought that they could attempt being their rival in the colonial aggression plan. England enjoyed power, but he honestly had to wonder what could mean to them and what would the implication be if they managed to get half of the world only focusing on something else and not on their spats.

It was only at the beginning of the 20th century that England reached some conclusion with his sovereigns, and was finally allowed to address their problem or, to say it better, the lack of it.

France had convinced England to try one of his last dishes at his apartment in Paris and he had enjoyed it immensely. Then, of course, the Frenchman had invited him to join him on the soft sofa he had just bought, and had begun molesting him in-between one glass of wine and the other. Soon, hands roamed on one another's bodies, kisses were shared and France eventually dragged England inside his room, where he had taken him until the Englishman had screamed his release between them.

France was still draped over England, both of them dripping with sweat as they attempted to get their breath back.

"*This* is real bliss," France told him after a while, tightening his grip on his lover.

"It is" England agreed, feeling completely at ease in his lover's arms. He lazily began caressing his lover's nicely trimmed hair, then, taking his time to admire each one of the

blond strands that fell through his fingers. "I need a haircut myself... You think we can manage before I leave for Japan?"

"Japan?" France complained with an overly explicit fit of jealousy, forcibly escaping England's hold. "What will you do there?"

"Just diplomacy, love, don't worry about it!" England lied without an inch of guilt.

France was going to see with his eyes, when the proper time came, the fall of his Russian ally; he just needed to finish up corrupting Japan and sending him to destroy Russia once and for all. After he had closed his deals, England would still be innocent in France's eyes and Russia would be finally taken care of, thanks to his Asian ally: France had to rely only on him and that was definitive.

"About your foreign affairs, however..." England continued with fake nonchalance, hoping to bring the topic to the real subject he needed to talk to France about. "When are you going to plan something *against* me?"

"We are not planning anything at the moment, as far as I know..." France purred distractedly against his lover's well-toned chest, eventually deciding to focus on the more enticing perspective of tormenting England's nipple.

"France!" England yelled, attempting to fend off France's teasing touches since he still felt quite sensitive after his orgasm. "I was being serious!"

"I'm serious too," France teased him, his voice low and mellow as he moved to actually tower over England's slender body with his own bulkier one. "I'm seriously planning a second round. I'll count it as payment for the coiffeur services, *mon cher*~"

England moaned under France's passionate ministrations and let them lazily distract him from the topic he had properly wanted to discuss. It was only when his lover had begun focusing his kisses and licks dangerously lower, on his abdomen, that he decided to gather all his strength and throw his lover off him and back up to eye level.

"Fuck you, France, I wanted to have a serious talk with you!" England yelled in his face, glaring at France.

"You can fuck me whenever you want, *mon amour*," France teased playfully instead, offering him an impish and cheerful smile. "We can talk all you want while I get friendly with your little friend down here, you know..."

France cupped England's cock with one hand and molested his still sensitive and wet entrance with the other, making his lover squirm in pleasure despite his continuous attempts at getting free.

"Fra-France!" England yelled eventually, as he successfully managed to kick France out of the bed.

“Ouch!” France yelped in pain, massaging his lower back where it had impacted against the hard floor. “What has gotten into you?”

“I said I wanted to talk, you perverted bearded bastard!” England bit back, still unsuccessfully trying to steady his breathing after France’s molestations.

“Then talk, so we can resume something more interesting!” France wailed as he climbed back on his bed, noticing only then England’s flabbergasted stare on him.

“Are you saying that talking with me is annoying?” England countered with a deadpan.

“I’m saying that I was getting hard,” France protested with too sincere honesty, making England roll his eyes at France’s idiocy and at his own, since he was still consorting with the guy.

“You’re *always* getting hard, unless you aren’t showing off your assets around Europe,” he countered, taking his chance to slap playfully France’s butt cheeks.

The playful gesture earned France’s proud smirk at him as he sat properly back next to his lover, cuddling against him.

“*Mais oui, mon cher*. But you like the show, *non*?” France literally purred, as he moved once again to straddle England. “It must be thrilling for you that plenty of people can admire my beauty but enjoying my body is solely for you~”

England groaned at France’s words. He was going to get hard too thanks to his lover’s voice and narration if this kept going, since a part of England honestly loved how, for all his teases and depravities, France eventually always went back docilely to him.

The long centuries they had been together had told England that France would never betray him; something that he wouldn’t bet five cents on if he just looked at how France behaved normally.

“It’s about that *solely for you* that I wanted to talk you about,” England decided to address his main point of interest eventually. “You know, after Napoleon you never really declared a proper war against me anymore... I was wondering whether you were getting tired of me or you were just busy elsewhere.”

France just stared back at him as if he had grown another head, stopping his teasing altogether.

“Tired of you, *mon cher*?”

“Well...” England attempted to explain better, lowering his eyes in embarrassment. “I mean, peace between us is good, but... Well, I’ve been wondering about the meaning of this.”

“The meaning is that I love you, *mon petit Angleterre*,” France told him plainly, smirking at him as he made himself more comfortable on England’s legs. “Waterloo was so devastating that I can use it to keep my sovereign away from you. If I were completely honest with myself, I think I should say *merci beaucoup* to you.”



England stared back at France and blushed deeply, as the meaning of his lover's words properly reached him.

"But... you're getting meaner, lately. Last week you made Canada say that you were his favourite parent!" England protested, his blush deepening as his stare wandered elsewhere. "How can you say that you're preventing war against me willingly?"

"I adore teasing you: seeing you hot, bothered and flustered is the joy of my life," France admitted candidly, closing the space between their lips a bit more before smirking at England enticingly. "I don't need a war to have that. I don't want another war to keep us apart... I thought I already told you this, *non*?"

France leaned a bit more towards England, impressing on his lover's lips the chaste ghost of a kiss.

England melted at the feeling of the soft pressure on his lips and attempted to bring France closer against him, putting his arms around his lover's neck. He then let himself fall on his back onto the soft mattress, allowing France to lay over him.

"How enchanting, did I manage to get you in the mood?" France whispered with leer, gracing with his lips the lines of England's ear shell, only to follow down to tease his jaw and then his neck.

"You might have," England admitted, smiling to his lover as soft shivers ran through his whole body despite his better judgement. "Not before I ask you something, though."

"Everything for you, *mon amour*~"

"Make a formal agreement with me." England blurted out, eyes shut close in shame and face redder than ever. "An agreement of stopping any kind of war hostility between us, present and future."

When only silence met his request and he distinctly felt his lover moving away from him, England cracked open suspiciously an eye to check France's expression.

"*Mon dieu*." France managed to answer eventually, despite the shock clear in his eyes. "It's something like –well, maybe not marriage, but something close to it..."

"Wouldn't you like it?" England rushed to ask worriedly, sitting up and opening his eyes properly to stare back at France. "If you don't want it, i–it's no problem. W–who would want to be always at peace with someone as annoying as you?"

As an answer, France just jumped over his lover, kissing him deeply on his lips.

"Of course, I would like to sign a forever treaty with you, *mon amour*!" France leered as soon as they parted, before kissing him deeply once again. "It would finally mean that annoying you can become my hobby instead of my fulltime work. Way more pleasing, if I can say so..."

“You're a bloody *idiot*, you know?” England countered, despite the happiness he was feeling in his heart at receiving a positive answer. His heart, which had been beating faster and faster in fear, was now feeling somehow lighter and warmer.

“*Mais oui, mon cœur*. You kept telling me that during these last thousand years, if I didn't play the idiot in your eyes, you would get worried,” France giggled at his lover before his stare on England turned more serious and predatory. “The only sad thing is that there won't be any more pretty scars with my name on it on your beautiful skin~”

“That's the same thing that bothers me, to be honest,” England admitted, taking his chance to caress France's jaw in order to savour the feeling of the short trimmed bear under his fingers. “I trust the both of us to find even more creative ways to hurt one another in the future...”

“Oh, I have no doubt about it.” France agreed promptly. “We're already top notch with verbal and psychological abuse!”

“Don't forget culinary, you still keep making me mostly French dishes~”

“I don't make you French food, *Angleterre*, I made you *edible* food!”

“This is exactly what I meant!” England countered, rolling his eyes at his lover. “Can we move on and speak about fashion?”

“You mean the one that you don't have?” France answered him completely innocent. “I wouldn't follow that line of thoughts, *mon cher*...”

“I certainly have more fashion than you have money, my love,” England pointed out eventually, grinning evilly at his lover. “As I have more colonies too.”

“That's low, *Angleterre*!” France whined, only to grin and get more comfortable over England, pinning him against the mattress. “Let's talk about the *Opéra*!”

“Why not about theatre?” England countered, smirking back at France in challenge.

“Cabaret!”

“Folk music.”

“Academic studies!”

“Scientific and technological research.”

“Historical romance novels!” France tried with an annoyed pout, hoping to get the upper hand this time.

“*Adventure* novels.” England opposed instead, rising a bushy eyebrow at France as to challenge him to try once again.

“Are you *sure* you want to sign up a treaty with me, *Angleterre*?” France asked eventually, despite grinning madly at his lover.

“Hell, yes!” England answered him, dragging France’s head down against his to crush their lips together and devour his mouth like a man possessed.

France returned the kiss with the same fervency, moving his body against his lover’s. Doing so, they both could just realise how their small dispute had actually turned on both of them. Their hands roamed over each other’s bodies, desperately attempting to feel everything they could reach.

“You sure your sovereigns won’t oppose it?” England asked eventually, completely out of breath.

France used up the small pause to retrieve his oil from the bedside table, before focusing back on his lover and on the question he had asked him.

“They won’t dare, *mon petit lapin*,” France answered, sounding quite menacing to England’s ears. “This is more than I ever hoped to get from you, I won’t allow anyone to come between the two of us.”

“How daring,” England teased him, stealing some oil from France’s hands to work more swiftly his lover’s cock into a full hardness.

“Always, when you’re involved,” France confessed, claiming once again England’s lips with his own as he began teasing his lover’s still ready entrance. “Let’s sign this *Entente Cordiale, mon amour...*”

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**T.B.C.**

# The World War One

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Allowing their sovereigns to focus on something different than the war between the two of them didn't just make half the world fall onto England and France's hands, but it also turned out to mean a renewed interest for France to weasel his way into European affairs.

He was too smart to be the one initiating a conflict or to do so without allies strategically positioned around him, but once he was certain he had everything and everyone he needed in the correct place he took an infinite pleasure in lighting up the sparks.

England stared at his lover's foreign affairs and at the current European situation with a bit of worry and plenty of reprimands, but France's planning seemed fool-proof enough this time, and England's thirst for more power could honestly rival France's. Besides, it was the first time he could see France's strategy from the other side, as an actual ally, and the deep admiration for his lover's deviousness made him careless in his assessment of the situation.

Eventually, the First World War began, overpowering both lovers together.

France fell into it first, since the *Entente Cordiale* was viewed more as an act of self-preservation between the two nations than as an actual alliance, at first; this misevaluation was obviously something that England was quick to prove as false to everyone, as soon as he was allowed to.

Still, it turned out to be a devastating war and soon enough France and England both found themselves in need to ask for America's help and, most importantly, for his money.

"Stop moving, idiot, you will only make it worse!" England reprimanded France as he poured more alcohol on his slashed arm.

"It hurts, for God's sake! You could be a bit more careful with your handsome lover," France whined dramatically, his pride honestly hurting more than his body even though England seemed to have put his mind into proving the opposite.

"It would have been better if my handsome lover didn't just drag this hell down on us to begin with!" England yelled back at him, earning France's pout for that. "Hell, France, you could have stayed well out of this!"

"Send your condolences to Russia then: he was the first one to involve himself! Or to Hungary: she was the one yelling ultimatums at random. Serbia wanted her independency. I really didn't do much, no matter what they say!" France countered annoyed, unwilling to pass for the bad guy who'd risked a war without thinking. "Besides, they weren't supposed to take my teasing seriously, it's not my fault that Germany has no sense of humour!"

“Are you *really* serious now!?” England protested, deciding he had endured France’s bullshit for long enough. “First of all: only an idiot would fall for that. And second: not even an idiot would fall for that knowing that *you* might be behind it! And leave Russia and Hungary out of this, I’m getting jealous of you using them like that.”

“You are so unfair, *Angleterre*. Alliances are made to intervene when your ally is involved, are they not? I’m not like Italy, changing the agreements he signs as it pleases him!” France moaned in pain, as England took once again his medical kit to retrieve needle and thread to stitch up France’s arm.

“At least he has the decency to ask himself what consequences some decisions might have for him.”

“Are you *defending* Italy’s choices now? I’ve never seen you attempting to sign up a proper treaty with him!”

“What value has a treaty with Italy? He changes idea as he pleases.”

“So you’re agreeing with me~”

“I *do* agree with you. *Still*, you two are so alike that sometimes I wouldn’t mind if you thought a bit more about your own preservation like he does. You don’t need to be like him *each* and *every* time.”

“You say this only because you know that I will never break a treaty that I made with you, after the *Entente Cordiale*!”

“*Never* might be a bit too much, let’s say *not when it really matters*,” England pointed out eventually, tightening up a particular stitch with enough strength to make France moan in pain.

“You’re a punk, *Angleterre*!” France whined, both at the pain of the needle on his injured arm and at England’s words.

“And your head is filled with air, wine and cotillions.” England retorted, his face betraying none of his thoughts on the matter.

Before France could answer back to his lover’s insults, the door slammed open, making both nations jump lightly in surprise and England –unwillingly this time– sting France with the needle.

“I bring good news!” America greeted cheerfully, closing the door behind himself just as loudly, plainly ignoring France swatting the back of England’s head and England asking for forgiveness. “We can lend you the money you asked for. The only catch is that you really have to make a serious attempt at returning it, because I’m not certain how much my economy will hold through this...”

“Make Germany pay you, he was the one who decided to initiate a world war!” France moaned, wincing in pure pain as England stabbed him once again with more force than

strictly needed – this time completely willingly.

“And who’s fault is that, I’d like to ask?” England pointed out reproachfully, earning France's pout for it. “Now stop moving, or I’ll have to start this over.”

America just sighed and shook his head, seeing his parents bicker like that in a situation that appeared quite problematic to his eyes.

“Can't you two just pull out of this?” He asked apprehensively. “Canada is worried that you might call him in again, and Seychelles is doing strange rituals on her shore...”

“What cute girl we have,” England noted merrily, still willingly hurting France more than needed even though his lover had stopped being restless. “I taught her so well~!”

“If you say so...” France countered, observing with relief as England finally finished his suture and stood up to gather some bandages to complete his work.

“When dad Nightingale is finished, are you going to take me seriously?” America protested, pouting in a way that looked even more childish than France's. “From the outside, this looks like a slow cooking mess!”

“We *can't* pull out, America.” England explained to his son tiredly. “The only productive thing I can do, at the moment, is insulting your mother and preventing him from falling completely into Germany's hands. Getting France is by all means having the best position to attack me, and I can't risk that.”

“How romantic,” France dead-panned, deeply offended by England’s plain and objective justification for his involvement in this war at his side. “And here I thought that it was because you loved me and we signed that *Entente Cordiale*...”

“There's that too,” England confirmed quietly, smirking at France’s irritation despite being still focused on bandaging his arm in the best way he could.

“Mum can't give up either,” England continued, addressing his son once again. “He's the one being attacked: he will lose territory and power if he is the one proposing an armistice.”

“And it would expose you to danger, if I called this off right now,” France added gloomily. “I love you, you know?”

“Unfortunately, I do know,” England concluded, finally satisfied with his work on France's arm. “Are you hurt anywhere else?” He asked, finally offering his lover a kind and worried smile.

“I'm fine,” France answered in a single breath, taking his chance to steal a small peck from England’s lips. Then, he turned towards America and gave him a big happy smile, opening his arms wide to finally allow his son to throw himself at him and embrace him tightly.

“Mom!” America whined against France’s chest, tightening his hold around his French father's waist. “Be careful!”

"Don't worry, sweetheart, we'll pull this through." France offered him in the kindest tone he could manage.

"And we'll find a way to pay you back, don't worry!" England added, taking his chance to ruffle America's hair affectionately. "If we survive."

America looked up at him from France's arms with a completely scared expression, obviously not getting England's humorous undertone. France rolled his eyes at the scene, and began petting America's hair affectionately to reassure their son a little bit.

"Of course we will," France pointed out, glaring and shaking his head at England despite talking to America. "And you will receive your money back with interests."

"Interests?" America asked curiously, not really certain he had completely understood the implications of France's statement.

"Lending money comes with asking interests, America, you can't tell me you didn't know that!" France asked curiously. "I'm personally aware of it, and everyone knows that you really shouldn't rely on me on matters of finances..."

"Yeah, that's why you usually just *take* the money and don't *borrow* it," England duly noted, earning his lover's glare on him.

"Wait, what would that mean?" France protested.

"That mum is right," England answered America instead of France. "Get some advices on this matter, if you are unsure about how this works, as far as it's not from him. Give him a stove or some inanities to play with and he will conquer the world, but keep him far away from finance and anything related to the management of his own money."

To add hurt to injury, England just smiled back at France with love and placed a caring kiss on his temple.

"Oi!" France protested, completely annoyed by the situation.

"You said yourself that it was true!"

"You could have told him that I was exaggerating!"

"You got involved into a revolution because you were near bankruptcy," England plainly pointed out.

"And?"

"Love, they *beheaded* you! I want you as far as you can from your own money!"

"You say it like I made myself broke..."

"I'm not saying *that*," England decided it was only proper to explain, in order to prevent France from divorcing him before they could even get to call themselves a certified couple.

"I'm saying that you didn't understand a word of what Necker said either."

"He was hard to understand!" France moaned in frustration, despite recognising that what England had said was honestly true.

"What's hard to understand in *France spent too much??*" England countered heatedly, irritated by his lover's plain inability to understand something so easy.

"Mom, dad! Please stop!" America eventually interrupted them, after having watched his parents' fight with a mix of confusion and hopelessness. "Jeez, you sure are lively. And here we were worrying about you..."

He freed himself from France's hold and stood once again back on his feet.

"I'll go find someone that can explain finance to me, I got it!" America announced, sighing heavily at how boring the subject sounded but realising that it appeared to be a quite vital matter at the moment. "I'll also tell Canada and Seychelles that you are fine, but if they begin screaming at me in French I won't be held responsible. Ok?"

"Thank you, America," both parents offered in unison, right before glaring at one another for having said the same thing at the same time.

Before another quarrel could start, America gave his goodbyes to his parents and left the room.

As soon as he was gone, France took a deep sigh of relief whilst England burst in a desperate cry.

"I want my children back!" England wailed, taking the spot in France's arms America had just vacated. France, who had actually expected all this, just held him tightly. "Before, I could just tell them what to do and they would do it, like good kids... Now even Canada openly dares to say that he disagrees with meeee!"

"Well, America eventually decided to learn some economics on his own. Our little scene worked out well," France reassured him, petting England as he had done before with America. "He will be fine."

"What if he doesn't learn to keep his economy in check!?" England continued crying however. "He's *your* bloody son!"

"Hey, will you stop this!? I get offended too eventually!" France protested, halting for a couple of moments his reassuring caresses on England. "Talking seriously, will we really be able to pull this through? I'm really getting tired and our allies are facing some unexpected problems, to put it nicely."

"My force is too divided: it's not easy for me to make assumptions," England admitted, getting more comfortable in his lover's reassuring arms. "We'll need to work this out through diplomacy, I fear... I will have a chat with America and Canada. I will also go back to Japan, he might be willing to help us out."



"I'll check in with Italy, then," France offered professionally. "We need to prevent Germany and Austria to get free access to the Mediterranean Sea and dominate it creating a whole front with the Ottoman Empire. I'll get also someone else to help us out in case of Russia's definitive retreat."

England nodded at his lover's plan, before pulling himself up and taking France's lips in a firm kiss.

"Please, be careful," He told France, looking at him deeply in the eyes. "I love you."

"*Je t'aime aussi*," France answered back, hungrily searching once again England's lips to kiss him harder and deeper. England answered back the kiss with the same fervency and soon both nations fell into one another's touches, desperate to remind themselves that they were still alive and well.

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France and England eventually gathered a decent number of allies and support forces to sustain Russia's expected and then official retreat from the war, among which they could also count Seychelles –as soon as she managed to get out of her own island in 1916– and America.

America's participation in the war had been negotiated by England, but England was actually the one that least wanted his intervention, since he knew France and himself, and America just seemed to have taken the worst out of the both of them. Moreover, he didn't really trust himself to take the best decision possible at the moment, since the World War I had tired him more than any other war and he honestly couldn't deal with the fact that France, from his point of view, had been the one that had been hurt the most. And not by him.

Certainly, France had to get better counsellors in matter of strategy and finances, but he himself had some good possessiveness issues to work out. At some point in his life.

That was why he had favoured France's proposition to actually make Germany pay for their war losses, no matter how a ridiculous amount it was. If he'd had the chance to think about it properly, he would have noticed how irrational France's proposition had been, unfortunately he was angry at Germany for touching France and France and America... well, they were irrational on their own. Proof was the unwillingness of America to ratify the Treaty of Versailles until 1921.

Still, France plainly told him to just fuck off when England had shared his opinion to his lover, pointing out how England had waited until 1924 to sign off the last treaty with Turkey. And still, England wanted to add, it had been against his own will, since he still felt like he had not crushed his enemies *enough*.

As time passed, however, England didn't feel less tired or less unnerved by what himself and France had endured during the WWI. He vented most of his bad temper by making love with

France and yelling at him, both glad he had survived it and unnerved by how stupid his choices were and how many weak points he had. He had known about those from a long time obviously – hell, he knew France's weak points much better than his own – but it was quite different when he was the one knowing and exploiting them rather than when it was someone else managing to lay their hands on him.

For all that his nature was quite irrational, England had always attempted to portray himself nicely to the rest of the world, at least when foreign policy and diplomacy were involved. The one of the very few acutely aware of England's punk nature was France, who ended up being barely believed each and every time he mentioned it.

Still, in the WWI aftermath even the rest of the world managed to see a tiny bit of his infamous irrational self, and not only thanks of his siding with France and America for making Germany pay for the whole amount of their war losses.

The news of America's economic depression in 1929, for example, had been announced to Europe through loud yells coming from the Dover canal. When it happened, none of the other continental countries could understand why England was deeming France responsible for it or why no protest had been made through the Calais side of it. That, along with the unusual high pitch of England's screams, made them all think that they had just hallucinated.

More cries from the Dover-Calais area were heard in 1931, however, when Canada managed to get partial independence. Even then no protests were heard back from France, something that worried the rest of the continent even more than the concept of England deeming France responsible for the better part of his problems.

To prevent the rest of Europe and the world to eventually get annoyed at them and attempting to discover too much of their family affairs, eventually France decided to organise a holiday trip to Seychelles. He kidnapped the hysterical nation one night, and before departing from London sent a message to his boys, ordering them to meet up at their sister's.

The WWI had caused plenty of damages to their lands and people, reason why they had honestly had very few chances to talk face to face about what was happening in their lives. Most of the time, their unofficial dates were brief and meant to make up for all the time they had been apart, or violent and rushed, answering the desperate need of England to reassure himself that he still had a lover to be angry at.

During the trip, even before getting to Seychelles, they finally had the chance for some well-needed explanations and confessions.

"I'm sorry about the WWI." France offered to his tired lover, as soon as they had boarded and had automatically cuddled together on the flooring of the big ship.

"It was unfair of me to give you the responsibility for the war, I was just... annoyed," England admitted, taking a deep painful breath. "How are you now?"

"Still badly beaten," France answered with a smirk. "But I trust you won't mind tonight..."

"You know I don't," England answered seriously, reaching for the top of France's shoulder, where the worst of France's scars from the war was still more than visible. "Even if I would have preferred having been the one hurting you."

"You always are such a gentleman," France countered amused. "You might have said you would have liked me without any scar."

"I wouldn't mind that, I honestly thought that the consequence of the *Entente Cordiale* might even be that," England explained annoyed, leaving be the injured shoulder to glare up at his lover. "But if you just can't stay put, I should be allowed to have preferences about who's going to hurt you, am I not?"

France laughed at England's remonstrations and held him closer to his chest, excusing himself for his behaviour with a kind kiss on his temple.

"You really think that was *the war to end all wars*?" France asked England eventually.

He had toyed with the thought quite a lot and eventually he had decided to believe it, but he had lived too long to truly have any hope that such an event like eternal peace might be true. He personally knew that he would always be ready to embark on a new war if he thought that his interests might need it, and he had no doubt that England would do the same.

Despite being father and son, he still hadn't figured out America, but his doubts were just about the reasons that would bring him to war, not about him having taken a liking to war himself. After he had realised that war could be treated like a business, he seemed even more eager to let himself be involved by it, especially if he gave himself bringing freedom as a reason for it.

If he liked being a hero, making a profit or just going to war France honestly couldn't know, but that was a fact that made him quite dubious that universal and eternal peace might realise itself. And this just considering his own family members, among which only Canada and Seychelles seemed to prefer a more peaceful approach to disputes.

"Hmm, I don't really think so," England answered him eventually, after he had allowed himself some time to think about it properly. "Germany is still there."

"Germany? Just him?"

"Yes. Making him pay for the war losses is a necessary wrong, but I would have liked to strip him of all his lands."

"You don't want it, honestly," France countered, looking at his lover with the arrogance of one who knew every inch of his lover's body and soul. "If we shared Germany's lands, you wouldn't have gotten anything, or you would have gotten something that would have been difficult for you to hold."

"Are you saying that I preferred money because I fear to get a land between you and Russia? I don't fear you *that* much," England protested heatedly. "And aside that, there's also Poland in the way, you know?"

"I'm saying that's interesting you mentioned dismembering Germany while you wouldn't have seconded the actual proposal," France explained, refraining to just jump on his lover for how much cute he was so worked up for nothing.

"Well, I hate him." England pointed out honestly.

"Your dislike for Germany rivals the one you have for me," France teased, purposefully letting his hand run up England's chest. "I might get jealous..."

"He *hurt* you," England said, staring at the sensual movements of France's hand on his chest, abruptly stopped as soon as he had said those words. "This means that I want him *crushed*."

"What if Germany will manage to get me whole?" France asked unsurely, his hand grasping tight England's shirt as he hid his face in the crook of England's neck. "Will you fight for me?"

"What kind of question is that!?" England yelled back at his lover, scared by just the possibility that such an event might happen "Don't even say something like this, you're bloody France, no matter how much I insult you and call you a weakling!"

"It might happen, though." France admitted quietly. "You were right saying those things to America during the WWI... I'm your weak point. Getting me is having the upper hand to have you."

"You are a bloody empire too, France!" England cried, grabbing his lover by the collar to make him face him properly. "You're not my weak point, together we have the world!"

"Would it be too cliché, if I told you that you are the only piece of the world I really care about?" France offered England sadly, allowing a soft sad smile to grace his lips. "I can live without making life hard for the others, but not without you..."

"Of course it's cliché, you blatant idiot," England countered, despite blushing scarlet at France's admission. "It's cliché, even though I'm ready to give up my empire but not you, no more differently than what you said."

"*Angleterre...*"

England prevented France from saying anything kissing him deeply on his lips, a chaste brush of skin against skin.

"Please, never fall, France..." he begged in a faint whisper over his lips.

France let his head rest on England's shoulder, somewhat reassured by his words despite the deep sense of dread that those brought with them, since he was certain that he had no chance to promise such a thing to his lover. Last time England had asked him some impossible guarantee about his safety, he had blatantly lied in order to give England hope, but now he couldn't, in good honesty, do that anymore.

If there was one thing his Revolution had brought him, it was this feeling to be morally obligated to be at least honest with himself, and he had come to the conclusion that lying to

England wasn't something he liked at all. At least not about the things that really mattered.

France had rapidly moved the discussion to some inanities, then, and England, despite his initial doubts at not receiving any kind of promise from his lover, had decided to follow his lead.

After all, they had felt more than anything the need to forget, if only for a while, the disastrous state of their countries in the WWI aftermath, so that they could manage to look a bit more like themselves before they finally met with the rest of their family. Talking about frivolities seemed to both of them a good way as any.

When they finally landed on Seychelles' shore, she and Canada were the first running towards them to meet them, both plainly jumping on France and making him fall at England's feet.

"What's up with the two of you, now?" France asked curiously, placing a caring hand on his children's head. As he had the chance to take in their appearance better, however, one thing in particular caught his eyes. "Canada, you've finally grown!"

"A little bit," Canada admitted sheepishly, sitting up to rub the back of his head as he smiled embarrassedly at his French father. "Dad gave me a little bit of independence, even though I'm still working it out..."

"I'm glad to see your hair is as gorgeous as always," France countered proudly, sitting up to thread his fingers in Canada's wavy hair. After he had bothered his son's hair as much as he liked, he turned his attention to Seychelles. "And what about you? Is dad taking good care of you?"

"I want you baaack!" The young girl cried desperately as she took her chance to drape her arms around his neck. "Take me back, please *maman*!"

"Seychelles, don't be ungrateful!" England reprimanded the young girl as France countered in the same shocked tone. "Why are you too calling me *mum*, now!?"

"I'm not ungrateful, I'm allowed to have my preferences!" Seychelles protested, looking up at England before focusing back towards France. "America and Canada do, so why can't I? It just seems proper."

France took his chance to glare at both his sons, who just grinned evilly back at him, Canada having stood back up to flank his twin. Now that they were both back looking the same age, America and Canada really looked identical, so much that even France, if it wasn't for the devotion he had for his own hair, would have had England's same difficulties in telling them apart.

"Bloody hell." France heard England mutter, as his lover had eventually notice the same problem France had.

"Mom, will you still cook for us?" America asked dubiously, as if he was unsure if he was still allowed to make such kind of requests.

It was just then that France and England noticed that America being there looked quite like an attempt of his brother and sister to include him more than America's own free will to join the family reunion.

"America, what's up with you?" England asked eventually, not really understanding his son's attitude.

America just sighed loudly and lowered his stare, as all of his body language showed them clearly his discomfort.

"I feel like I'm really changing... Is this what it means to be actually independent?" America confessed staring unsurely at his hands. "I- I don't know what to do..."

"So, there's still a bit of the cute child you were deep down there," England noticed, as Seychelles stood back up to reach for her brother and he could finally help France standing back on his feet too.

"I do worry too, you know that!?" America protested, blushing heavily seeing his parents' grins at his confession. "I'm still new at this!"

"We'll keep the secret, sweetheart, don't worry," France reassured him. "And of course I'll cook for you, I'm not severing connections unless you want me to!"

France winked at America, who blushed even more at his French father's teasing, whilst England took his hand to drag him in his arms and hold him tight.

"Don't fear to be yourself with us, you idiot," he told America plainly, freeing him from his embrace soon after to look at him in the eyes. "As I told your mother once: you can't stop changes, you can just deal with them."

"Yes, America," France offered, walking until he was once again shoulder-to-shoulder with England. "And if you have questions you know we're here."

America nodded at his parents with a big smile, finally feeling a little bit more reassured at least about his family situation.

Glad that America's fears were momentarily put on hold, England draped his arms around France's waist and took Seychelles' hand in his.

"So, milady," he asked his youngest child, "Where are we heading?"

"This way!!!!" Seychelles cheered happily as she took a firmer hold of England's hand and grabbed over him France's with her free one, separating them by force to drag both of them towards her house.

America and Canada exchanged a brief smirk of comradeship between one another seeing their sister's enthusiasm and followed them happily.

Despite the initial doubts, all nations had to agree that they had all needed the small vacation. Seychelles had been enthusiastic to have the chance to show her family around, especially her

brothers, since they weren't big experts about her land.

Uncaring of England's protests and America's lack of understanding, all the cooking was left to France, who however did his best to please everyone's tastes. It was almost as if no time had passed since they had played the big happy family overseas, like no revolutions and no WWI had happened, even though the consequences of the World War had seemingly reached even Seychelles.

The signs of having her whole economy at the beginning of the war cut off and then heavily battered were more than noticeable. Still, for some unknown reasons, Seychelles seemed to be ready to give her all for her family, something that made France actually reconsider many of his choices. He honestly wasn't the cause of the World War, but maybe if he had been more careful the mess wouldn't have spread wide enough to get through to his children.

Canada was honestly a problem, being still officially part of England's Empire, and America's intervention had been a hard-made necessity. Seychelles, however, was supposed to stay out of this.

Despite the uneasiness of his feelings, France attempted not to let his discomfort out in the open and did his best to allow everyone to enjoy their short-lived spare time together; it was really something they should consider doing more often, considering how little was needed to keep the whole family happy.

Certainly, Seychelles warm weather had helped, but being all together to just laugh and play had its value as well. Local and international duties could easily wear out not just England and France but also their kids, even with Canada and Seychelles still under England's tutelage and America outside of the world crisis.

Still, the vacation had come to an end and they all had to go back to their business, despite making plans to meet up for holidays and special occasions. That was for the whole family together, though, since France and England knew that they couldn't live separated for too long.

This was a truth they would have to come to terms with, sooner or later, but they could only hope they'd have enough time left to confront that on their own terms.

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**T.B.C.**

## Chapter End Notes

A/N: Florence Nightingale was a British social reformer famous for her nurse-reforming work on the battle field during the Crimean wars, and the founder of modern nursing.  
Jacques Necker was finance minister under King Louis XVI and was the first attempting

—multiple times, in different ways and without success- to have the French Monarchy see reason about how much they spent.



# The World War Two

Crossing the Dover Canal was way quicker than sailing through the Ocean, yet France and England felt like they could find a way to shorten that distance even more.

It wasn't something unheard of, since the idea of connecting France and England had been one of the many things that had been proposed quite often in history, along with the hypothesis of merging the two nations; even Napoleon had proposed a proper link over the Dover-Calais canal to France during his attempts to seduce him back into war, and such a proposal had worked perfectly well to make the mistreated nation capitulate.

Nevertheless, when France pointed out that some of his engineers had suggested the option to actually build an underwater tunnel between England and France, England had plainly laughed in his face. This was, however, mostly for the curious association of France and engineering than because the idea wasn't honestly worth a try. None of them had the money and the patience for turning it into a reality, though, so there was no harm in harassing France.

The impasse their economies were in made France and England quite annoyed, being used to do whatever they wanted. Also America, heavily battered by his first big economic crisis, lived through the sudden and unpredicted stop to his own personal growth as an annoyance that had one name as one cause: Germany, guilty of having answered to the provocations and turned a small Serbian rebellion into proper war.

Therefore, harassing Germany became a guilty pleasure for the whole family, eager to return to what their life was before the World War, no matter how much that way of behaving was gradually unnerving the always patient Germany and Italy along with him.

The violent political choices of the two nations worried both France and England, but except attempting to get some strategical alliances, they didn't think they would need more. After all, they couldn't out-rule them and asking money instead of lands had honestly seemed to them getting easy on Germany.

They could only hope, however, since France was more that certain he would have no chance of survival in a direct conflict the way he was now. For that reason, among others, he had chosen money over lands, in the vain hope that Germany would be too focused on working to even think about fighting against him and buying new armaments.

Fearing the same things England kept an eye on the situation in Africa wherever France couldn't reach, attempting to prevent those who might soon become their enemies to get close to their African domains. He had called in Canada as well, just to be on the safe side in case the actual war started and they needed quick help and support.

Aside for that, however, they could just prepare themselves for the worst and straighten their alliances, betting the money they didn't have that Italy and Germany's violent governance wouldn't really turn against them.

Something that eventually happened all of sudden, not long after the first skirmishes had begun, taking down half of France in front of Canada and England's shocked eyes.

If the Dover canal had looked immensely wide to England only a few months before, now between himself and the 'free' part of France there was an entire piece of German-occupied territory.

He had not yet recovered from the shock of losing his lover, however, that the war moved to British soil, or better then, to his airspace. The continuous attacks to the Great Britain had managed to occupy a bit of England's mind, which would otherwise be busy worrying for his lover.

The whole goddamn situation he had found himself in, moreover, made England realise how stupid they both had been until then, and him in particular; without France protecting him by land and keeping enemies distant enough that he had actually time to plan a counter attack, England was a surprisingly easy target, especially with those new weapons available.

Despite the bombing and the fall of France, England had done his best to give refuge to the Frenchmen escaping through the strait and to the French government itself, but none of them had news of his France. Surprisingly, even the complicit government in Vichy did not know a single damn thing about their bloody nation... and then people wondered why he hated Frenchmen: they were plainly useless, the missing France included.

All three parties involved took France's disappearance badly, however, since without knowing his whereabouts it was impossible to know if a French nation was still existing in the hearts and mind of his people, and if yes, which one it was. Also, De Gaulle's *Appel du 18 juin* didn't make France reappear, appeal that had honestly been England and De Gaulle's last hope.

The appeal had been heard in France's occupied lands, however, and had motivated the French resistance forces, who began working even harder to recover the occupied zone; thanks to that, more information managed to be shared between Paris and London, not only coded orders from London, but also news from the resistance. Among these news, there was also France, who had apparently not only survived the fall, but also mingled among the rebel forces.

Not really knowing how to take the news, England just dropped on his knees and cried in Canada's arms, relieved to know that his lover was alive and at the same time angry because the fucking git had decided to put himself in danger instead of taking refuge in England like any sensible nation would have done.

He took this chance to insult himself, the one who was still dealing with him after all those years; Canada and De Gaulle just listened quietly to his remonstrations, allowing England to vent his frustration out about France until he could finally recompose himself.

Many weeks full of anguish had to pass before it was announced that more forces would move from France to England in order to fight at their side and that some French colonies had taken a stand against Vichy.

When the RAF finally fled to London to join the *France Libre*, England was there along with De Gaulle waiting for them, hungry for information –on Germans plans and the occupation forces, obviously, but hopefully also about his France. Despite his best expectations, he found in front of his eyes the very same French nation instead, clad in a pink pilot uniform that included a long white scarf.

If he hadn't had other priorities, England would have *strangled* France with that bloody scarf.

“France!! Where the hell have you been!?” England yelled, as he stomped angrily towards his lover. “You should have stayed with your bloody government! No one knew what had happened to you, you fucking git!!”

“France is divided, *mon cher*,” France answered him, ignoring the string of insults and closing the few remaining steps between them to finally hold England close in his arms. “I needed to be sure that there would be people fighting for me before I left...”

“I was scared that you turned to Vichy,” England said, trembling with anger and relief in France’s arms. “Or that Germany took you away who knows where.”

“I’m France, *mon cœur*, we don’t just go on strike because we like that, you know?” France reprimanded England with love, caressing reassuringly his head. “We do really believe in our *Liberté, Egalité and Fraternité* motto, no matter how much of a dick we can be about it.”

“I would have bet you just liked strikes and generally being a bother,” England countered acidly, glaring up at France unmercifully.

“You just have no principles, *Angleterre*,” France countered, taking his chance to kiss his lover adoringly on his pouting lips, before allowing England to lead him back inside. “Let’s work to find more allies, *mon amour*. France might be settled for the moment, but we need to fight this off somehow.”

France and England had little time to savour the feeling of finally being reunited, since they had to put themselves to work as soon as they re-joined their governments.

They fought against time in order to find more allies and to keep their hopes high, no matter how scared they were to actually lose. It was quite hard, especially considering that many of the Frenchmen still living in France didn’t hold much trust in England’s chance to survive the continuous attacks. In all honesty, Englishmen themselves weren’t really sure of it either, something that worried their nations even more than the actual attacks.

Still, they were the first on attempting to show to their people that they weren’t supposed to give up.

France helped organising the Resistance back in France and also managed to get the support of more of his dominions and colonies, adding men and forces to their colonial troops, already counting England’s colonies and their shared co-dominions. England, on the other hand, used up all the power in his hands to demonstrate how hard to take down the British Empire was.

Playing with diplomacy and stubbornness against the Axis' questionable aggressive choices made them survive, still the situation was desperate even with the addition of Russia and China to the number of their allies.

When everything seemed about to fall, despite France and England's accurate planning to keep America out of at least this mess, Pearl Harbour happened and then a worldwide, open war was actually declared. More than anything else, Pearl Harbour was supposed to be a provocation, but as expected America didn't allow it to pass, coming quickly to Europe to join forces with the rest of his family, who had been irritated by the attack as much as him.

After what had happened to France, the simple idea that America could end up bombed and conquered the same way made their blood boil in their veins.

Canada, apparently, felt it even more strongly than his parents, since he barely even waited for his brother to decide what to do before declaring official war against the Axis. If England had ever had doubts about Canada being his son, it was probably because he had never seen the young nation truly angry.

With the addition of America to the Allies forces, their chances of surviving rose up significantly. For a mere strategic reason –officially– priority was given to secure Great Britain and make the government of Vichy fall, cutting off all its resources and therefore allowing France to get back the dominion of at least his own ‘free’ lands.

England and America's Operation Torch in French Africa did make the faux administration fall, eventually, but in the hands of Germany. The day after the fall of the Vichy Regime, France had disappeared from the British encampment. Desperate panic quickly let room to sheer anger as soon as England found a note his lover had left for him, telling him that he had left for France in order to assess the damages and reorganise the Resistance.

When England and America rushed back to London, hoping to have more news of the French idiot from his own government, it turned out that not even de Gaulle could find news of him inside the occupied territory.

England, Canada and America, giving up any attempts at being gentlemanly, went straight for the weakest of the Axis. It was during the Sicilian offensive that England could finally confront Germany on the disappearance of the French nation.

After getting separated from their own armies to settle their personal disputes among nations, England had eventually cornered Germany and quite easily disarmed him from his too big rifle. Feeling himself in a pinch, Germany had attempted to fight England off with his bare hands, but soon he had to admit that it was a hopeless attempt, since the island nation knew how to use his short stature, his skills and whatever he had at his disposal better than he would ever think to.

“Why do you care about someone like Italy?” Germany yelled at England, as the island nation had eventually succeeded in pinning him against a tree with a few well-aimed knives. “Can't you see that he can't even defend himself!”

Germany's pale blue unsure eyes met only an angry stare.

"That's why I'm taking him down and away from you," England countered coldly, as he marched towards his victim, his gun pointed between his eyes. "Have you seen how cute he is? He's already acting like we're his saviours... I wonder how far I can go with him before he will even begin to understand that I'm playing with him."

"Please, leave him to me!" Germany pleaded eventually, his eyes fixed on the barrel of the gun now only a few inches from him.

"Where's France, Germany." England answered instead, his glare never leaving Germany.

"What?"

"It's not an exchange offer, but I could be more lenient to your Italy if you tell me where he is."

England lowered his arm and put his gun away, in a vague attempt at offering some kind of truce.

"I-I have no idea," Germany stuttered, more than just a bit surprised by England's words. "I thought he was still in exile in London."

"Are you telling me you don't even know what happens within your borders and your occupied territories?" England almost spit back at him, taking a strong grip of the lapels of Germany's uniform. "Do you have any idea about what your government is doing or being with Italy made you just as unaware of yourself!?"

"England, you know I can't really decide how to administer my own territory..."

"Still, you should be able to administer your relationships with us! You should be able to give suggestions, when was the last time you checked in with Hitler and confronted your opinions??" England yelled, grasping tighter the German nation and shaking him with anger so much that he managed to unpin him from the tree, the knives falling at their feet in a tingling rain. "Germany, where's France? You *can't* not know! He is your responsibility now that you fully occupied him!"

"I-I just fight, nowadays, I didn't have time—"

England didn't let him finish, bringing him down to level with him with a quick and violent tug.

"I'll burn Italy to ashes if you don't give him back!" England yelled, beginning to cry in earnest in front of the shocked stare of the German nation. "Give him back to me, please, Germany..."

The two nations stared silently at one another for few seconds, but Germany had no time to ask England anything about that strange and unexpected pleading that America reached the place where they were quarrelling, with South Italy tightened up like a spinning top resting listlessly over his shoulder.

"England, I found the older brother~!" America announced merrily, completely ignoring the mood. Canada followed him not far behind, quite uncertain whether they had interrupted something important or not.

"Imprison him somewhere," England answered America, letting the German go to dry the few tears that had fallen from his eyes. Before walking towards his sons he however stared back with disgust at the German nation. "I fear it will be useless, however. Germany knows *nothing*."

He had taken care to put as much emphasis he could on nothing, attempting to suggest that it wasn't just of France's whereabouts that he was talking about.

"Shit!" America commented irritably at the news, as his brother swore on the same tone "*Merde!*"

England, hearing them swearing, turned his accusing stare on his sons, glaring them into submission.

"Sorry!" they both said in unison.

"We'll go back to our camp with South Italy," England announced to Germany. "You've better retreat from Sicily or I won't be held responsible for the consequences. Besides, know that next in line to be occupied will be the younger brother and you can count on this as a fact."

"England!" Germany called him back after the island nation had already re-joined America and Canada to walk back to their camp together. "You know that I can't know what happens in my country and in my occupied territories, if I did--"

"It's not my bloody problem!" England growled at him, turning once again towards him. "My problem is that we are missing a nation, Germany. *My* nation!"

"*Your* nation?" Germany repeated, attempting to give meaning to those words. "I thought you hated one another?"

England turned properly to Germany to glare fully at him, but stopped himself from any further movement.

"Germany, you have no idea what seven hundred and thirty years mean," he managed to answer him, even though his voice began breaking at admitting the reason of his anguish out aloud. Before he ended up crying once again, he turned back in the direction of the camp and signalled to Canada and America to just follow him. "C'mon, kids, let's go."

Germany stared at the other three nations' retreating backs, not really sure about what to think about England's anguish for the disappearance of his long time enemy. Because they were just enemies, right? If they weren't, he would have thought twice before convincing Austria to fight to keep Serbia that first time. Maybe they were also friends, after all he had always seen them together, no matter if they were fighting together, one against the other or if they were just wasting time... fuck it.

Just one thing was clear to him at the moment: he had to find France before the Allies finished Italy off.

Germany put the biggest part of his personal strength and resources to the task, but he couldn't manage it as quickly as he had hoped, since South Italy's definitive fall and Italy's surrender had happened quicker than he'd imagined.

He still tried, however, since being alone once again had made him realise far too well how careless he had been; he had wanted to get free from those nonsensical obligations he had been put through after the WWI, but he never intended to make France disappear from the world scenery. He had wanted to find new friends, he had never wished to take away someone else's.

Moreover, he knew too well what his sovereign was doing, but admitting it would be too much for him... Hitler had never cared to explain a single thing to him and had used Germany like a doll to make the Germans do what he wanted without complaining, and Germany had allowed that, because he didn't know any better and because his people *really* had been brought to the verge of despair.

It seemed he had run from himself and his responsibilities a bit too much, it was time to do something else besides fight... because it was the right thing to do, but also because it was a matter of survival. Italy's survival first and foremost, because facing an irate England was something no one would like or could survive; he'd just had a taste of what facing the British Empire meant, but it was enough to make him wish never to have to confront him directly anymore.

Germany ran like a desperate man throughout his occupied territories, attempting to fend off the assaults of the Allies as much as getting information about France. Still, not a single one of his men could do much with just the description of him, and the rebellious Frenchmen he managed to interrogate rightfully kept their mouths shut.

He decided to search the camps, then, something that for the first time made him realise that maybe, just maybe, it would have been all right if he just lost the war.

Germany didn't even know that the camps mostly held only one kind of prisoners, something he learned only when he went searching for France at the camp in Vittel, where the surprised guards told him that it would be hard finding a recluse Frenchman there, blond or otherwise, since it was mostly for American and British prisoners.

When he had made them provide him with a map with all the possible camps where a Frenchman could have been brought, Germany's stomach lurched in apprehension, realising how many there were only in France. If he added up the ones in his country and the ones in Poland, there was no way he could find him and keep fighting at the same time.

Eventually, he one-sidedly decided that he must still be in France and that if he had mingled among the rebels he must have been with the political prisoners. This made him lower—even more one-sidedly—his chances down to two camps, the Natzweiler-Struthof Camp and the Royallieu-Compiègne internment camp. With his national priorities going into not being crushed by England and America's fury, he managed to get around checking them only when

it was already June 1944. They had been waiting for some kind of action from the Dover Strait for ages, but, luckily, the bad weather might give him enough time to find the bloody Frenchman and, hopefully, bring him back to England in a decent shape.

He was checking thoroughly the first of the two, however, when his men announced him that England and the two kids that he kept bringing with him had managed to land in Normandy quite spectacularly.

Between sustaining the assault in France and checking his own confines, it was already August when Germany eventually went around checking also the second camp. The Allies, if they even managed to move forwards, were expected to get to Paris around the 17th of August, and after that they might have had about another ten days before they actually got there.

It was enough time to abide England's request.

It had to be enough time, because there, amongst the few communist rebels still secluded inside the evacuated camp, there was also the French Republic, confined there in a cell separated from all the others.

“Why the hell didn't I know that he was here!” Germany yelled irately at the two extremely young German officials that had lead him there, as he rushed to France's side to check his injuries.

He had been ruffled up a lot, but he still looked like he had suffered nothing too out of the ordinary. He had been chained to the wall, though, and thick notebooks had been compiled on the desk at the opposite corner of the room. He left France's side to walk towards it, so that he could check the contents of those books. He found them filled with plenty of notes about the nation's body and some descriptions of basic experiments and punishments they had submitted him to.

From what Germany could read, France had been quite lucky. Perhaps, the researchers that had been working on him had feared that, if they tampered too much the French Republic, they would have been discovered and that had been the key to his relative safety.

That, or they simply lacked means: this wasn't one of those laboratories they had arranged back in Germany or Poland and didn't have any proper research facility attached. Experiments weren't even supposed to be made in this particular camp, even less on a political prisoner.

Germany had to wonder why they hadn't transferred him... If he allowed himself to be completely honest with himself, though, he could actually guess why, and it was a reason that made him feel more than just a bit stupid and gullible.

If France had been brought on German soil, Germany would have known he was there the moment he laid a foot on his land and he would have stopped everything. Sure, there was still the chance of getting him to Poland, but Poland was as conquered as France was, and would have found certainly a way to inform the rest of the world that France was with him.



Of course France had to be in France: there was only a nation that wouldn't call help in favour of a nation, the very same nation that needed to be saved. This situation must have left France in the hands of just a bunch of freelancers, though...

Germany's eyes rested on the first batch of data they had collected from the French nation, written during the first days of the fall of France, before he had managed to escape the first time... Hell, no wonder they had chained him to a wall in seclusion, France was apparently as much of an escape artist as England.

There were photos, there, and notes not too kind on the nation of love, who had been captured covered -or so they had written- in relatively fresh love bites that very first time. That was what had prompted them to start taking notes on him, apparently, because a more accurate analysis of the body of a nation and the experiments had come only after.

They'd noted how they thought those love bites had been done by another man, possibly the same person for all of them, and they'd been certain that France's body showed all signs of a man in a homosexual relationship. Their reasoning sounded like complete bullshit to Germany, but he had to admit that at least some of those conclusions seemed more feasible than others.

The morbid interest of who had fucked the nation of love apparently didn't last for long, since the following times he had been captured he had always been found bite-less. Only a bit further on they had started questioning France's love life once again, since the infamous love bites had reappeared.

Germany was about to throw away the stupid notebooks when something clicked in his mind and he decided to check the dates of those annotations. The two homophobic ramblings about the love bites had been right after France had just disappeared the first time, before Vichy even started, and then right after his second disappearance, when Germany had just occupied the whole nation. Before both events, he had been with England, first in London and then in French Africa. Germany was sure of it, because after their meeting in Sicily he had paid more attention to his enemies' whereabouts. Seven hundred and thirty years England had said... But certainly they had known one another for more than a thousand years. Italy had mentioned something about France and England being childhood friends and seven hundred years didn't even cover their adult age, now that he thought about it...

Fuck it.

England was going to crush them.

"Why I knew nothing of this!" Germany growled at his subordinates, letting the notebooks fall back on the table to stride back to the soldiers. "This is the last time I'm asking you!"

"It was an information known only by very few people," one of the young officials attempted to say, only to be taken by the collar and slammed against the wall from a furious Germany.

"I'm your nation and he's *my* responsibility!" He yelled, panic having the better of him.

"England will have our heads for this and it will only be your fault!"

“Oh, I most certainly will.” A young evil voice teased, coming from behind him.

Germany could not move to check the identity of the newcomer, however, since a shiny knife was pointed at his neck, making him let go of the German soldier.

“England.” Germany murmured, staring unimpressed as the two young officials that had lead him to France fall unconscious in front of his eyes after two quick dark shadows had knocked them out.

“Thanks for the help, but it’s already too late,” England announced to Germany, his voice sounding slightly mad.

Germany barely felt England moving slightly his free hand to make a signal to someone, and soon America and Canada rushed by his sides to unchain the French nation and check his conditions.

When the two younger nations had finally managed to open the shackles around his ankles and wrists, France had fallen, boneless, into America’s ready arms. He gave no sign of turning back to his senses, though, reason why Canada began checking his vitals right away.

“He seems fine,” Canada announced after a while, proceeding to help out his brother to sustain France as soon as America had showed his intention to attempt making France stand to bring him outside.

“Bring him out, kids. We’ll meet up with the rest of the troops in Paris as soon as he regains consciousness,” England ordered to his sons, his voice firm and extremely cold. “They will be glad to see that he’s still in one piece.”

“What about Italy, now?” Germany took his chance to ask. “I am the one who was careless and didn’t realise France was missing, Italy is innocent in this.”

“Innocent?” England countered in extremely cold disappointment. “Should I show you Italy’s crime records?”

After having seen the whole range of England’s violence and rage, this freezing coldness seemed almost unnatural.

“Innocent in the France affair, England, don’t you even think that I missed how you got this worked up only because it was France that we were talking about!”

“France is strategic in protecting Great Britain from land, proof being we scored big attacking France from England,” America repeated diligently what England had taught him, before granting himself a smart smirk. “I am a genius, am I not?”

Germany heard behind himself England’s strained chuckle at America’s words and he couldn’t stop himself from noticing that America’s stare, despite being fixed in his direction, sometimes glanced behind him at England, as if to ask a silent approval from the older nation.

Now that he had uncover the hardest of it, this whole deal was even too easy to disentangle.

"Indeed," Germany admitted, staring back at America and then at Canada before lowering his eyes to France and then once again on America. "You must have gotten from him your lack of shame in bragging," He stated plainly, nodding in France's direction.

The knife England was still holding against Germany's neck got closer to his throat, so much that a thin layer of blood marred Germany's pale skin. Germany could only swallow and hope he wasn't playing with a fire he honestly couldn't deal with.

"Don't you even dare assume anything, Germany." England threatened, with the same cold voice he had offered him since he had set foot inside the cell.

"Shouldn't I assume that it is the most pitiful excuse I ever heard that you didn't accept the fall of France just for strategic reasons?" Germany questioned, attempting to sound simply matter of fact. "Among the many stupid things my scientists working on him noted on that book, there was also the fact that he seems to have only one male lover... am I wrong assuming that's you?"

"You're walking on a thin line, Germany," England threatened, but had no time to say more that a soft chuckle was heard from France.

"Was this what they were so interested in?" France teased, his head still low on his chest. "I would have told them without any need to strip me bare every time. Contrary to you guys, my clothes have a certain style."

"France!" England let out in a relieved whisper, his grip on the knife he was still holding ad Germany's throat shaking a bit. Germany could only file the information away as the answer he was waiting from England –that his assumptions were true.

"They seemed surprised by it, probably because of your name of the country of love," Germany explained rationally, earning himself an arrogant glare from the still mangled Frenchman.

"I do fear someone has vocabulary problems, *mon ami*," France retorted coldly. "I'm the country of *love* not the one of porn or sex. *S'il vous plaît*, keep in mind the difference."

Germany grinned back at France, then, much to everyone else's surprise.

"You are right, we all have been too charmed by the scenery you bring with you to actually take a proper look at the bigger picture." Germany admitted. "I'm sorry."

England lowered his knife since the mood had relaxed, but Germany still didn't move.

"If you have no intention of freeing this place today you've better go before someone comes," Germany offered them quietly.

England apparently made another sign to his sons, who quickly began dragging France towards their father and out the cell. Only when they were out of his sigh Germany took his chance to turn and look at England straight in the eyes.

“Why are you letting us escape?” England asked, his voice sounding slightly dubious. “We'll soon get the whole France back, you know? We won't just stop after retrieving France.”

“I wouldn't expect anything less from someone like you,” Germany acknowledged plainly. “France was my responsibility, however, and I failed him. The least that I can do is to allow him to escape”

“Why?”

“It hurt losing Italy from my side,” Germany confessed, staring down at his feet to not let the other nation see the depth of his pain. “I never wanted to make you suffer the same pain, I'm really sorry England. My hands are tightened on many things, but you were right: we nations are responsible at least for one another's wellbeing.”

England nodded at his words, glad that as nations something between them could still be salvaged. Then, however, he just turned and began walking towards the exit of the camp to join the rest of his family.

“See you back on the field!” he greeted, before hastening his pace and disappearing from where he had come from.

Germany took a deep breath and then let it out, staring up at the ceiling above him in search of some kind of idea to get out of the mess he had brought on himself and on the rest of Europe. As for now, however, he could only hope that what he had done for England had been at least enough not to turn Italy into a bloodshed.

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England quickly reached his sons and his lover, and after a while they were also reunited with the detached group they had brought with them for their rescue operation. Following France's instructions, they moved to a secure zone frequently checked by the Resistance and set up a camp there.

Once everything was settled, America took the lead of the operations to secure the small camp and arranged with the squad leader the plans for the day after, the sentry duties and what to do in case of an attack. In the meantime, England had brought France inside the first tent they had managed to put up and attempted to treat him the best he could: it was hard to say which kind of wounds looked the worst, if the ones the occupation had inflicted on the nation or what had been done to his actual body. Just the thought of some human hands touching his lover's beautiful body made England fuming with pure rage.

Canada had managed to get the notebooks about France's captivity, and he had been honestly tempted to read it... Therefore, he had just thrown the bloody books in the camp fire as soon as they had lit one. It was after he had sent America to deal with the war duties so that he could see with his eyes what they had done to his lover; America hadn't been at all happy, but

he couldn't do much more than obey, especially because he didn't have his English father's aptitude with playing the nurse.

When everything was ready and the main troops had been informed that the rescue of France had been a success, America could finally re-join his family, only to stare at the scene of a still deeply shocked England disinfecting France's wounds like an automaton. Canada could just stare at the scene, sometimes following his father's instructions to hand him a bandage or a medicine.

"How is mom?" America asked worriedly, unsure about how to take his father's shock.

"He's still an occupied territory: he's weak," England answered sadly, his hands tamponing delicately away some dried up blood from France's temple.

"How cute you are, *mon cher*," France protested, having just enough strength to brush his cheek against England's tights, currently pillowing him.

"I didn't mean that, you git," England protested lightly, interrupting his nursing work to caress his lover's head properly and move some fallen strands of hair away from his still closed eyes. "Fuck it, France, occupied nations don't plan a guerrilla from the inside while they can be safe with their allies!"

"I didn't want to die or to become German territory," France answered, staring up to meet England's barely focused eyes. "I didn't want to leave you alone or turn your enemy... not again."

"France..." England could only whisper, his voice sounding only a few inches from breaking.

"You will not!" America yelled at them, unnerved by how weak and battered his parents looked. "I'm here, am I not? I'll be the hero that saves you all!"

"Don't say stupid things, America!" England reprimanded him quietly, but America was having none of it.

"I left you alone in Europe and you lost mom, it won't happen again!" America almost yelled, as his brother just closed the space between them to hold him tight by his shoulders and calm him down. "I was so scared, you have no idea! Mom conquered, you bombed within an inch of defeat..."

England sighed hearing America's words: for all that he went around with the idea of playing the hero, America had honestly been a key asset in this whole second World War and in the liberation of France. He and France had always put less care than needed with America's feelings.

England and France shared a quick glance and smiled at one another, before France attempted to move into a better position to talk to him.

"*Amérique*? Could you please come to mum?" France said, after a few failed efforts to get up properly.

America looked at his English father and his brother for confirmation before actually getting closer to France, apparently deeply scared to hurt him.

When he was within his reach, France looked up at him with shining blue eyes full of gratitude.

"Thank you, *Amérique*," he told him, reaching up to caress lightly his cheek. "You really saved us all this time..."

"Mooom!" America answered him, crying desperately as he threw himself in France's ready arms.

"Now now, *Amérique*," France reprimanded him eventually, closing his arms around his son before he started caressing his head. "You are a grown country now, aren't you?"

"How come I always manage to rile him up, while you can just as easily calm him down?" England complained, taking his chance to reassure with a quick ruffling of his hair also Canada, who had been honestly worried as much as America despite showing it in a much less noisy way. Canada smiled happily at the small gesture and gravitated back to England's ready arms to be cuddled too.

"Because I can deal with you, *mon cher*," France answered winking teasingly up at England. "I'm quite experienced..."

"We've been fighting since we were kids," England deadpanned.

"Just because I *want* to rile you up. On the contrary, you and America do it naturally," As he said that, France took his chance to tickle America, who just tightened his grip on his French father as he giggled. "Isn't it true, *Amérique*?"

"Are you saying you and I could have a normal relationship if *you* just decided so?" England realised shocked, staring back at France with his big green eyes.

"*Oui, mon cher*, but where would the fun be in that?" France offered him, interrupting his harassing of America to wink up at England.

England rolled his eyes at that plain admission and bend over his lover to leave a small peck on his forehead.

"I missed you, you bloody idiot..."

"I missed you too, *mon amour*," France answered, smirking up at him sheepishly.

"What are we doing now that Germany knows?" Canada decided to ask before his parents started flirting right away, his head resting on England's shoulder as his hand searched for France's.

In all honesty, after all those years growing up with them, Canada still couldn't figure out a proper way to deal with his parents' way to touch and torment one another, romantically, sexually or otherwise. When he had joined the Allies, he had hoped that, being their family

situation a bit of a secret, his parents would turn out to be more within reach... Still, even in the world outside their family, his parents were always attached by the hip to the other. There wasn't any actual difference that he could notice: they yelled at one another, they fought, they flirted... well, France flirted with England, but it was still a flirt.

His family was weird, but he wouldn't change them for the world... even if a bit of his brother's straightforwardness and ingenuity whenever he literally walked on their parents would have made his life a little more bearable.

"I don't think he will say a thing," England answered Canada reasonably, tightening his grip on him to reassure him.

"We just need to deal with him as soon as possible!" America cheered happily, leaving France's arms to stand on all fours and look up at his brother better. "Don't worry, bro, the hero will beat him up and protect our family once and for all!"

America's honest declaration of intent earned sweatdrops from all the other members of his family.

"Don't play it like we've already won, you idiot!" England yelled back at America. "The moment you believe with certainty that you will win, or that you will be fine, is when other people will attack you!"

"But we are getting Paris! Things *are* going fine!" America pouted, sitting up on his feet.

"Things were going fine with Operation Torch too, and yet we lost your mother right after that!"

"That's because he didn't stay back at home where the hero could protect him!"

"Oi oi!" France interrupted the banter between his lover and his son. "I'm a nation on my own rights, I have every authorisation to deal with myself!"

"You got crushed in record time!" England yelled back at France, focusing back on him instead that on America.

"Russia was supposed to help me deal with Germany!" France whined, only managing to anger England even more.

"I always told you that he wasn't reliable! Give me your bloody foreign policy!"

"The hell I will become your dominion, at least annex me properly!" France countered, attempting to straighten himself up once again and only succeeding in hurting himself even more.

"Mom, dad... please..." America tried to cut into the banter to no avail.

"At least mum is as lively as ever, it seems," Canada offered sympathetically to his brother, who just nodded in return.

“How are we sleeping tonight?” America asked his twin, ignoring his still quarrelling parents.

“I’m sleeping with mum!” Canada answered quickly, taking his chance to steal the place in his French father's arms America had vacated.

“Wait, *I* want to sleep with mom!” America protested, taking a firm hold of the back of his brother's shirt to drag him away.

“Oi, America, don't fight with Canada!” England attempted to interrupt them before their fight managed to hurt the still mangled Frenchman. “You can sleep with me, if you want.”

“But I don't want to!” America pouted, making England's thick eyebrow twitch in disappointment.

“I’ll be the only one sleeping with your mother, if you act like this!” He yelled back in anger. “C'mon, up and leave him be!”

“But dad—” America and Canada began at the same time, only to be glared by England.

“He's too weak to endure your fights, be good and let him rest.” England explained in a kinder tone, using the fact that Canada had moved from France’s arms to embrace his lover properly to help him to where they’d prepared blankets for the night.

After he settled France properly down, he laid at his side and stared back at his sons, who were still looking back at him like scolded dogs.

England sighed, then, and made a tired signal for them to get closer. Happy, both Canada and America rushed to hold him tight in silent thanks and then proceeded to snuggle themselves between their parents, just like they were used to when they had been children in need of reassurance.

Canada was held tight in France's arms and America was basically draped over his brother, his back against England's chest as the island nation enclosed him with his arms.

Their family really was quite dysfunctional, but it felt like a real relief having it finally back together.

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**T.B.C.**



# Marriage proposals

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Winning the WWII was easier said than done, but eventually they all managed to pull it through and to also prevent England to curse the Axis –and Russia– permanently.

America, noticing the disastrous state of Europe, signed his English father up for a psychological course on how to deal with possessiveness and took definitively the lead of the peace negotiations; Canada had proposed a similar egotism-dealing program for both his brother and their French father, but he had been completely ignored, as always.

The Axis had been stripped of the possibility to have their own military offensive forces, and were condemned to have armies for a simply defensive role unless they were asked otherwise. Considering that everyone had had their own losses, the lenient decision had been approved and ratified in reasonable time by all those involved, though most of the deals were left to everyone's foreign diplomacy and America's supervision.

Among the things America liked to meddle with there was also his parents' still alive colonial empire; most of his fights were with France, the one guilty to have taught him the value of freedom but still choosing to whom apply such rules, since they were supposed to exist for everyone.

France would usually answer that America himself was creating his own dominions with his politics of keeping everyone in check in Europe, meddling with their internal and foreign affairs.

America would then counter that European nations had proven to be unreliable in keeping their freedom of choice, ending up with the very same French nation, battered and conquered.

France would thus point out that he and England thought the same about their colonies, no matter how the three of them dealt differently with this assumption; the authority over those countries and the uneven power relations were just shown differently, but all three of them did the same things with the same results.

Whenever France and America fought on matters of freedom and domination –a.k.a. colonialism against neo-colonialism– England just watched silently, sipping his Earl Grey. When one member of his family attempted to pull him into the argument, he would quietly point out that he had always been against such a bullshit concept as freedom was, and that, as far as he was concerned, both America and France were on his list of colonies-to-be.

That was usually enough to quieten up the family feud.

At the end of it all, it was going to be America's victory, since the anti-colonial movement slowly but inexorably readied itself to take away most of England and France's conquests. England, however, improved the Commonwealth system, while France planned alternative

ways to somewhat get around the limits that were about to be given to his ruling. Acting like that, the loss of their empires –when that’d happen– was going to turn out to be more formal than otherwise despite making America finally happy.

It was the beginning of a relatively peaceful period, at least if compared to what they had to endure during the World Wars or the traumatic experience of the Revolutions. England and France kept on their joined comradeship in foreign policy despite, of course, keeping on also the small teasing and bit backs. It was all a so well-oiled routine, that it would feel bad if they didn't irritate the other just on a matter of principle, no matter if they ended up in tons of common projects and war actions.

The NATO project gave them the chance to maintain their relationship with their sons despite the distance, but also the chance to maintain a bigger worldwide reach without being accused of wanting to expand their empires. The European projects, moreover, helped them to keep their neighbours in check, especially Germany. Yet, the final solution about how to properly prevent another WWII couldn't be found.

On that point, France and England weren't much on the same side, mostly because France thought something radical must be put in place whilst England thought that large scale agreements on the different topics were fine enough. Eventually, France decided to go to the only nation that seemed to at least be willing to listen to his complains.

“I'm so glad that Big Brother came visiting~” North Italy cheered happily, while sipping his glass of wine. Around them there was no one, allowing the three nations to enjoy lazily the beauty of the view from Piazzale Michelangelo.

“I'm not happy at all. So, if you could just spill the beans and leave, all the better,” South Italy countered instead, stirring his iced coffee.

“You're so mean,” France countered with a dejected pout, nose deep into his own chalice of wine. “Be kind to your poor Big Brother, will you? Aren't we family?”

“If we are family, then why did you keep attempting to reign over us for the better part of our history??” South Italy yelled back at the older nation, earning only France's grin and a light chuckle for it.

“I think I managed it well enough too~” France teased, prompting South Italy to stand up from his seat only to be stopped by a still kindly smiling North Italy.

“Why don't you tell us why you came here, Big Brother? You don't look well, and that's only to put it nicely,” Italy offered gently, tugging his brother's sleeve to make him sit down once again. “Have you fought with England again?”

“Be reasonable, Veneziano,” South Italy countered, as he finally sat down and took a sip of plain water. “What's strange about them fighting? If he came at our place each time they argue, he would be always here.”

“We didn't fight,” France clarified, resuming his tired demure. “Not more than the usual, at least. We have quite a different point of view about what we are supposed to do from now on

in Europe, though, and I needed someone to share my thoughts with."

"Is that why you came to Florence?" North Italy asked surprised. "We were on opposites sides~"

"Yes, you were with Germany. And I'm not enough of an idiot to believe that a world war can't happen again, even though I know that he is different from what we have seen," France explained, straightening his back as his eyes went back to stare at his glass of wine. "You know him. How can we stop him in a friendly way?"

"Burn down Berlin once and for all!" South Italy countered hastily, sipping his coffee with plain annoyance. "Why would we need to risk having the potatoes-eater back, when we can take him down now that he is weak? Don't you agree, Veneziano?"

"You know I don't, Brother. Germany is my friend!" Italy whined instead, before turning seriously to France. "We just need to give him friends, that's all he ever wanted."

Italy smiled kindly to the completely flabbergasted France, and then finished quickly his wine before pulling out from his jacket a small notebook and a pencil, easily drawing on the paper the sketched outlines of the political Europe.

"Look, this is what we are now, in 1950," Italy explained. "Everyone has their own interests and their armies. But what if I do this?"

Italy took out a rubber and deleted partially the lines separating the different countries.

"A federation?" France realised, seeing the progress of his cousin's drawing. "You are right, a federation has one single army... Germany won't use his army to attack us, because it will be our common army!"

Italy nodded vigorously and scribbled something at the side of his illustration.

"We would have the chance to make a Europe of people, doesn't it sound wonderful Big Brother? We could all be friends and live in peace~!"

France smiled back at Italy and finished quickly up his glass of wine to give his whole attention to Italy's drawing.

"You are right! Treaties come and go, but a federation is harder to break." France agreed, stealing Italy's pencil to scribble something over it too. "It could be implemented with common institutions, common laws, common currency... So you can't break the deal unless you give up everything else!"

"That would be great Big Brother! I can't do all this by myself, but if you are at my side we can!"

"Let's try!" France agreed enthusiastically, admiring their project. "England won't like this, but I might be able to talk him into it..."

"Stupid alcoholic, he will just kill you off. Not that I would mind," South Italy sighed discomfited, seeing the two other nations' hopes rising. "Your project will stop Germany, tying him to the rest of us, but the opposite will also be true."

"Romano?" France asked dubiously as Italy asked at the same time "Brother?"

"Are we really ready to be tying ourselves to Germany? Not even Veneziano would, no matter how much he loves him."

Both nation stared back at Italy's drawing, by now filled with their combined notes.

"I would still like to try," France admitted eventually. "At least we would make the rest of Europe talk about something more definitive than those treaties..."

He stood up and attempted to wave them goodbye, only to be stopped by Italy grabbing tightly his hand.

"Aren't you going to stay for dinner?" North Italy whined, his lips pursed in a sad pout. "We were having pizza at Romano's..."

"I have a meeting tomorrow morning, I can't stay," France excused himself, taking out some coins to pay his wine. As he stared at his francs, however he couldn't refrain to sigh aloud. "I didn't stop to change my money before coming here."

"We are in the core of Florence, paying with francs is not a big deal," South Italy pointed out as he finished his coffee. "You should know it, you always forget to change money."

"Yeah, is just..." France answered, tracing with his thumb the words *Liberté Egalité Fraternité* written on his coins. "Despite the reasons why we spoke about it, a common currency would not be this bad..."

France shook himself out of his thoughts and gave the coins to North Italy, grinning widely at the younger nation.

"I'm leaving these to you, I'll start on the European Defence Community proposal!"

Italy nodded back and smiled to his cousin, weaving him goodbye.

"Attempt not to make it another Treaty of Paris!" South Italy yelled back at France as a way of answering back to his goodbye, before sighing loudly and shaking his head in disbelief. Seeing France and his little brother so happy, South Italy could just hope he'd be proven wrong about his assumptions on the inevitable failure of the *CED*.

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The first time France proposed the European Defence Community Treaty to England, his lover thought it was a joke and simply laughed in his face. When France and Italy proposed it

during a European nations' assembly, he firmly refused, not before yelling at his lover how much of an idiotic proposal it was.

France had accused the insult, but had soon left the meeting running after the island nation, letting all the others to think that he was going to attempt getting back at England for the insult he had received. Instead, as he had reached and stopped him, France could just stare sadly at England.

"Why won't you even want to discuss this!? It's important!" France yelled at him, looking dejected and betrayed by his lover's hasty and violent objection to his well-meaning proposition.

"France, I'm not the only one thinking this is blatantly stupid!" England countered, crossing his arms on his chest as he glared at his lover. "Go convince the others, it might turn out to be an easier job."

"I want to know why *you* don't want this," France protested. "It's an admirable project and it would assure us peace in Europe. You and I are right in the middle and heavily battered by the WWII, this project could protect us and scare off or trap who would attempt to take us down."

"I can defend myself well enough. *You* are the one that every time he gets attacked on his own soil lose: your ability to win in attack is proportional to your *inability* to win in defence." England reprimanded sternly. "However, as a NATO member and a father you should be ashamed of this proposition!"

"What the hell are you saying!? I'm not severing connection with my children!"

"The hell, France! Look from another point of view, what will America and Canada think that we are closing ourselves in a European fortress?? What will Seychelles think, considering she lives already separated from all of us?"

"Don't use our children against me, England!" France plainly threatened. "I won't allow you this!"

"I'll use them as much as I want since they *are* my reason to oppose this aside the obvious," England continued, however, closing up the space more between the two of them as his gaze turned a bit more sad and caring.

"The obvious?"

"Yes the obvious. Something I'm quite sure neither you nor Italy thought about." England stared deeply in the questioning eyes of his lover, before sighing and caressing his cheek with his hand. "Do you realise what a common army means? I won't have a German commanding my men, and I won't have a German commanding *your* men. I had enough of being attacked by Frenchmen, even more considering Frenchmen sent by Germans!"

France swallowed and lowered his head, unable to answer back to his lover.

"Romano said the same thing," he admitted, feeling England's touch on his cheek turning more firm and affectionate.

"Because he's smart and not dramatically dreamy like you and Italy." England kept reprimanding, moving his hand to ruffle playfully France's hair. "It's a miracle you two managed to survive this long being so naive in these kind of things..."

"I'm certainly *not* naïve," France remonstrated proudly, earning England's chuckle for it.

"You are, my love. This is what keeps you going," England punctuated, shaking his head as he moved closer to France to cup his face with both hands. "I'll think about this, but I want you to do the same. Alright?"

France nodded and smiled gratefully at England, moving his lips to press against his lover's to kiss him chastely.

"Thank you England." He rested his forehead against his lover's.

"I can't say no to you for too long, at least not without giving you a proper reason," England admitted, joining once again their lips together. "Are we fine? Will you stay at mine tonight?"

"At your service, *mon cher*~" France agreed, holding him closer by his waist. "What should I cook for you?"

"All things that I will never eat, if I know you well enough," England teased, before moving away from France enough so that he could grab his wrist and lead their way out the conference building in Rome.

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Some time had to pass before everything came to the inevitable end.

England had agreed to discuss the deal along with France, but kept himself distant from the states of the ECSC, who eventually started creating the basics of a realisation of France and Italy project. Despite that, France couldn't really say it was his lover's fault if the nearer they came to a conclusion the less he was convinced that his idea of a European Defence Community was workable.

As the final deal went for the definitive ratification to the respective parliaments, France was all but sure about what he was doing. Italy, seeing his brother so unsure, decided to wait for his decision, making France feel his uncertainties even more.

One final night, France woke up screaming due to his nightmares, and was both glad and sad to find no one sleeping at his side. Still shaken by the bad dream, he rolled on his bed to get a hold of the telephone he had placed on the nightstand and with trembling hands began dialling England's number. After a while, England's sleepy voice came from the other side of

the receiver, directly asking who the heck was calling that late at night after the more proper hello.

Hearing his lover's voice, however, was exactly what France had needed to stop shaking in complete fear.

*"Angleterre!"* France managed to answer him, his voice coming out as a pained complaint.

"France? What happened?" England asked unsurely, recognizing his lover's voice.

*"Angleterre..."* France forced himself to say. "Could you please come at mine?"

"France, it's night. You should be sleeping!" England reprimanded him irritated, but his approach changed drastically when he didn't receive any answer from his lover. "France? Are you alright?"

"I—" France attempted to say, his voice cracking. "I'm sorry. I just... need you here."

"France?" England barely managed to ask before France just hanged up on him, deciding he had troubled his lover long enough. Now that he was slightly more coherent, he had to admit that calling England had honestly been a stupid idea. He rolled once again under his blankets, curling pitifully on himself to pretend the comfort England couldn't give him.

In the meantime, England had however given up sleeping, had written a few notes to whoever wanted to meet him the day after and had started driving his car straight to Dover. Once he had gotten there, he had pleaded and paid double a few workers on the shore to move him to Calais along with his car in the depth of the night – damn him for being a frigging island. Nothing was supposed to work at night even by road as far as he knew, however, reason why his only hope to get to Paris was by his own car... He only needed to remember on which side of the street he was supposed to drive and hope he wasn't checked for controls: he had visas and something akin to diplomatic immunity, but not his quite evidently British car.

Solved the transportation problems, England was quick back on his way to Paris, driving at a speed fast enough to trick random onlookers to think there was an actual Frenchman driving. Or an Italian. Just to be on the safe side, however, as he got to France's he parked his car inside his lover's car box before running up the stairs to his apartment.

As England got inside, he called for France, but no one answered him. After stealing a glance to the nearby clock and noticing that, despite his rush it was already seven thirty, he sighed.

"Are you still in bed, sleepyhead?" He called then, as he moved to search for France in his bedroom. "France?"

When he got inside, he saw France turning and tossing in his bed, moaning softly in his troubled sleep. England quickly rushed to his side, sitting on the opposite side of the bed to attempt calming him down.

“France, wake up!” He yelled at his visibly sweating lover, slapping him lightly on his cheek. “C'mon, honey!”

He barely managed not to collide with France as he actually woke up, sitting up straight as he took a big panicked breath.

“France, it's alright. I'm here.” England tried to comfort him, putting a caring hand on his shoulder as the other moved some strands of curly blond hair away from his eyes. “How are you?”

“England” France noticed, hugging him tight as soon as he got over his initial surprise. “You came here!”

“Of course I came, you idiot. You sounded overly pitiful over the phone,” England countered, relieved to have his lover once again safe in his arms. “Are you having nightmares?” He added worriedly, though. “Since when?”

“1945...” France admitted plainly, feeling England shudder in his arms.

“You could have told me!” England reprimanded him, as he moved away from his embrace enough that he could glare properly back at France. “What the hell, France. It's nine years of nightmares... that you don't have when I'm with you, now that I think about it.”

“You are right, I don't.” France acknowledged, staring pitifully down at his blankets. “I'm sorry I called you tonight...”

“You should have called the first night this happened,” England scolded him instead, moving to lay on the soft bed, dragging down France over him so that they could cuddle one against the other. “What are you dreaming about?”

“The camps...” France confessed, taking deep breaths of England's scent to calm down himself.

“I thought that as political prisoner nation they didn't touch you—”

“My people don't talk, therefore I can't too...” France pointed out matter-of-factly. “Do yours?”

“You know that no one does,” England admitted, sighing loudly before tightening his grip on France even more as he began caressing his long hair, slightly tangled from the night of unrestful sleep. “Still, you could try telling me what you can.”

“You were right, I can't ratify the European Defence Community Treaty...” France confessed. “I— I just wanted for the nightmares to stop. I thought that a new world and a complete restart could be the solution, but...”

“You can't trust Germany.” England finished for him.

“I don't trust *German leaders*.” France clarified. “They even managed to overrun the will of their nation... The will of their people, in some ways. What defence can another nation build



against that? We are supposed to deal mostly with one another and our sovereigns!"

"You don't want to risk one of your children having to answer orders to a German Kapo. That's understandable," England offered, refraining from pointing out that he had told him so when they first talked about the bloody EDC. "There are different ways to deal with the rest of Europe, if you find out that this is too definite and bothersome. You asked too much from yourself this soon."

"I fear you are right," France admitted, huddling close to England under the soft blankets. "I'm sorry about all this, Angleterre..."

"Don't worry about me, France. You should be worried about yourself... What are you going to do?"

"I *can't* ratify the agreement." France confessed meekly. "Even though I was the one proposing it..."

"Are you feeling guilty?"

"Yes... and tired... and scared, as well," France admitted. "The United States of Europe had a nice ring to it, and we lost four years for nothing."

"Unify the army isn't the only way to get to that dream if that's what you like," England offered. "Maybe I could be part of something too, if you make some less hurtful proposals."

"You speak well, but you are still keeping Germany and Italy out of the Western Union."

"Hmm..." England murmured, thinking properly about France's mentioning of the Western Union. "You gave me a nice idea, you know France?"

"Uhm?"

"I'll explain this to you as soon as I verify we can do it," England cut short, leaving a kind kiss on France's head. His lover had just had his dream crushed, he certainly wasn't going to offer him a new hope before he had checked with his own sovereigns that it was a feasible proposal. "Until then, just trust me."

"If you say so..."

"Did I ever delude you?"

"Is this a tricky question?" France protested, moving them slightly so that England laid more properly on his back under him. "While we wait for Europe to become a federation, why don't we start by merging in a dirtier way?"

"I wouldn't mind that, considering that I had no sleep after you called. You owe me," England teased, before turning once again serious. "You will have to talk with me properly later or tomorrow, however."

"I'll try," France promised, after sighing out loud. "But I don't really know if I can..."

"You can, France." England reassured him, opening his legs wider in order to accommodate France better between them. "In due time, of course, but I trust you will manage this just fine."

"Thank you, *mon amour*," France offered kindly, lowering his head to kiss England chastely on his lips.

"You always rush into things without thinking properly beforehand!" England reprimanded him, taking his chance to ruffle playfully his hair.

"A unified Europe had his charm... You kept yourself out, but I hoped to do something that would have been good for you too." France admitted sheepishly. "I wanted to be one with you, *Angleterre*, in more than just the sexual way."

"You know that's my dream too, having you only to myself," England confessed, letting his hand run down to caress France's cheek and then his neck. "But the political meaning can wait a little while, don't you think?"

"Let's become one our usual way, then, *mon cher*~" France concluded, kissing England deeply. "As long as you promise me that you won't keep me away from you politically!"

"I won't, France," England promised, dragging France even more against him. "I'll help you through this mess, my love, I swear this to you."

It would be the end of the EDC, but certainly they could find some other kind of solution, this time together.

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Before the end of the year, England had managed to obtain the redefinition of the WU into the new WEU, that was finally going to include Germany as well. Italy had also decided to contribute to the attempt to make peace between the battered European nations in a less scary way, inviting most of them in San Remo for the annual song contest he loved to held. His friends liked the show so much that in less than a year some of them attempted to put on a similar show contest but at a European level.

France, obviously, was among these first nations butting in headfirst in the project, secretly planning to drag his lover into the Eurovision as soon as he could, since he didn't look so much against this kind of proposal.

Considering his initial declarations and the good disposition towards the WEU and the Eurovision, England's refusal to marry him during the Suez crisis in 1956 hurt France quite personally.

He hadn't necessarily agreed with his sovereigns about the absolute necessity of becoming basically an English dominion and England was still going to help out, even though it wasn't

like he would have liked and they would have to rely also on Germany, but...

It was the idea of finally marrying England, however, that France had actually liked. England had refused him, though, saying that he had no intentions to marry him like that. After seven hundred and forty-two years together, it stung badly, no matter how much he had attempted to play it like he was just playing along with his sovereign's wishes.

After the rejection of the proposal, France had attempted kidnapping the island nation, but England had easily gotten free from his grip and pointed out once again how much he was against such a proposal. Then, they had still yelled at one another at length, until eventually England had gotten annoyed at him, called France unreasonable and left to mind his own business.

Only when he had been left alone inside England's office France had felt the full weight of England's words fall on his shoulders. England had honestly looked sure of himself when refusing his hand in marriage, even though he had just asked France for a reason why they should actually get married.

What kind of request was "*Tell me a reason?*" when they had lived close together for more than a millennium? Sad and deluded, France just went back to Paris, hoping to forget the dull pain he felt in his heart.

It was already night when the door to his apartment was slammed open.

"The hell, France, why the fuck are you here??" England yelled at him irately.

"I *live* here," France answered quietly, eating the piece of meat he had cut just before England's flashy arrival. It was way past dinnertime, but France had needed his time to get back to Paris without a car of his own, and as soon as he had gotten there he had allowed himself quite a few drinks before going back to his apartment and decided that he should at least put some food in his stomach.

"I got back home and you weren't there!" England explained angrily. "I thought you would have spent the night at mine!"

"I never said I would and you didn't ask," France answered normally, his voice betraying just plain annoyance.

"Ask?? Since when do I need to ask you to stay, you just pop up in my house out of nowhere!?" England countered, slamming the door behind himself.

"You are right. I realised that I was being impolite doing that, I'm working on lessening the bother I give you."

"Just say that you are getting it out on me because I didn't help you out with the Suez crisis like you wanted! I discussed the whole afternoon with my sovereigns about how to help *you*, you know. I'm still working to get you out of that mess, even if I said no to that!"

"Yes, you said *no* to *marry* me!" France yelled back at him eventually, standing up and slamming his hands on the table. "I'm sorry that France is not enough for Great Britain!! You could have said it seven hundred years ago!"

"Where does this come from, now?" England asked, somehow less annoyed than before.

"I don't want to hear how you will help about the Suez crisis, it just makes it hurting *more*!" France told him, sounding sadder than angry as his voice almost broke. "You said you didn't want to marry me, I don't give a *shit* about the rest."

"Marrying you *like that*, France," England pointed out, sighing aloud as he finally understood what the problem was. He closed up the few steps left between them and attempted to take France in his arms, only to be shoved away by his lover.

"Don't touch me." France told him quietly and seriously. "It's my fault for thinking that we might be special to one another. I'm not here to be played with."

"France, we obviously are," England countered. "Don't ever think that you're not special to me!"

"Not enough to marry me, it seems."

"Enough to not marry you just because someone else says we should!" England told France, caressing his cheek. "If *you* want for us to get married, we can do it."

"If our sovereigns aren't involved, it won't be official," France pointed out, despite allowing England's physical attempts at reassuring him.

"Do you want it official, France?"

"I wonder..." France answered, sighing loudly. "I'm a secular nation, I should like something certified by the state..."

"France? While you decide about this, can I ask you something?" England took his chance to ask.

"What?"

England smirked back at his lover and knelt in front of him, taking his hand in his.

"French Republic, would you marry me?"

"You're the *worst*, *Angleterre*," France commented, as his lover smirked back at him and stood back up to stare at him in the eyes.

"Better than asking you to sign a calendar!" England pointed out, tightening his grip on France's hands. "So, do you want it?"

France simply threw himself in his lover's arms, pressing his lips hard against England's.

“Of course I want it!”

England held his arms tighter around his lover, savouring the smell of his daily cologne mixed with the one of the meat he was having for dinner.

“Marriage proposals makes one hungry,” England moaned, as he bit lightly France’s bare neck. “I could eat you, you know?”

“I could make you something~” France offered, releasing his fiancée.

“I’ll take the offer, but I honestly just meant that you smell delicious.” His words earned him France’s smirk, allowing England to steal a kiss from those teasing lips. “I would have asked you to marry me ages ago, if I knew you wanted it...”

“I honestly never thought about it,” France admitted sheepishly. “I don’t mind what we have. Still...”

“Still, when your sovereigns told you to marry me, your fantasy began running wild.” England finished France’s thoughts.

“Yeah...” France agreed tiredly with a sigh.

“I’m sorry if it was a bit crude as a marriage proposition,” England admitted, allowing his forehead to rest against France’s. “Even if I’d planned it beforehand, I doubt it would have come out better...”

“It was lovely, *mon amour*,” France reassured him, kissing England adoringly on his lips before taking his hand and leading him towards the kitchen. “What should I make you?”

“Do you really care?”

“Of course not, *mon cher*, but it would at least give me some idea about what *not* to cook,” France admitted shamelessly, as he opened his fridge and stared at what was inside. “I have camembert!”

“Please, France, I already said I’m sorry!” England whined in desperation.

“Not cute at all, like always. Hmm... Omelette?”

“As long as it’s not one of your experiments...”

France just rolled his eyes and took out the eggs and some random vegetables and cheeses from the fridge.

“By your standards even cooking something properly is experimenting with food!”

“Don’t be harsh. I did my best just to get here with the last ferry to France and the last train to Paris!”

“You could have called me instead of running,” France pointed out, as he gracefully cut and mixed the ingredients.

“Like you would have answered. I don't like losing my time,” England countered plainly, stealing a piece of carrot from France’s chopping board. “I will have to use your phone, however, I was supposed to have a meeting in six hours.”

“Why did you come then?” France asked, hitting England’s hand with his wooden spoon before he managed to steal another piece of carrot.

“I had put my mind on you staying at mine tonight...” England whined, massaging his hurting hand.

France looked behind himself at the clock on his wall, now tickling the one and twenty.

“Yesterday night, at the moment,” France corrected with mirth, taking his chance to take England’s hand and leave a kiss on the reddening fingers.

“Your train was slow!” England countered hastily.

“Your ferry isn't any better.”

“Let's work on that tunnel you mentioned before the war. It really is too many hours to run after you whenever you need me or you are angry at me... We should also consider living together straight away!”

“*Oui, mon cher Angleterre*. You will pay for it, though. You know I'm broke.”

England rolled his eyes at his fiancée.

“I guess I can't say that I will get you at the moment, can I?”

France literally glared at him.

“Call while I finish here, *Angleterre*, you can use the phone in my study. I'll make you ask for forgiveness tonight: in six hours you will still be useless”

England sighed and went to call his queen, hoping that she wouldn't kill him for the late hour. Time to finish his call and schedule a second meeting and France had already served him his omelette and reheated his own meat.

“Wine, *mon amour*?” France offered, as he opened a bottle of Bordeaux wine.

“Go for it,” England approved, sitting down in front of his fiancée.

France waited for England to take his chalice before making a toast with his own, offering a flirty wink to his lover.

“Cheers,” he told him happily. “To our marriage.”

England smiled at his lover and answered the gesture, before entwining his arm with France's and taking a sip of his wine.

France was startled at first, and then followed his lover's lead, allowing their foreheads to rest against one another's as their eyes met.

*“Je t'aime,”* France offered and took England's red lips into a sweet kiss.

“I love you too, France,” England answered, disentangling from his fiancée. “You will love me less when we will start to talk about the actual marriage, though...”

“Why is that?”

“You are atheist, I'm pagan,” England explained, as he elegantly started on his meal.

*“Merde,”* France swore, earning England’s smirk.

“It could get worse. We could be frenemies,” England teased, dodging a piece of bread France had thrown at him in anger.

Yes, this marriage thing would be really worth his time.

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**T.B.C.**

## Chapter End Notes

A/N: CED is the Italian acronym for the European Defence Community Treaty... which was obviously otherwise called Treaty of Paris, at a certain point, like many of the agreements involving France throughout history.

Pagan and atheist refers properly to religion in public places in the two countries. When dealing with freedom of religion, it is said that there are two ways: the British way (everything is allowed as long as it respect the law) and the French way (nothing is allowed in public places)

## Romance dating

The world, and also the European meetings they'd decided to have among themselves –at least until their governments worked things out on their own– became pure hell. Not one meeting ended before vases were broken or tables flipped.

America and Germany, who were informally in charge of the meetings, on suggestion of Spain and Austria had decided to arrange a separate room in which France and England could be violent at one another without troubling the remaining nations.

At the beginning of the seventh year, America decided to face the matter headfirst. He opened slowly the door to the newly named '*The room where England and France fight*' and closed it soon after, so a flying vase would crash on the wooden door and not on his nose.

When he reopened it even more slowly, he could clearly hear his fathers' hysterical cries.

"You voted against me for the EEC!!" England was yelling. "Don't tell me this isn't true either!"

"You didn't even want to be part of it, just fuck off!" France screamed back at his fiancée.

"*You* fuck off! I bet you're happy being all alone and cosy with Germany!"

"Alone my ass and at least he helps me properly, not like you!"

"Ask *him* to fuck you, then, if you like him this much!"

"Says the one that goes hiding behind America, his own son! Go to hell!"

"Not before you!"

The two older nations then threw themselves at one another's throats, attempting to strangle their partner in front of America's worried and astonished stare.

"Mom, dad... What the hell are you doing!?" He attempted to ask, only to end up in the crossfire of his parents' insults.

"*Your father* is being a dick!" France answered him, still not releasing England, who was currently taking the worse of it.

"And *your mother* a slut!" England managed to whisper, despite looking almost violet because of the suffocation.

"I am *not*!" France countered, freeing England all of sudden only to put his hand on his hips and glare down at him. "How dare you!?"

"Why leaving me out then!?" England yelled back at him as he sat up to stare back at his fiancée's eyes, his lips pursed in a pout and his bushy eyebrows knitted in a frown.



“You didn’t accept to marry me for the Suez crisis!” France then retorted angrily.

“I proposed that same night!”

“We haven’t decided anything yet!”

“I won't just sign up a bloody paper! It's aseptic!” England pointed out outraged.

“I won't have a complicated and expensive ceremony for gods that don't exist!” France snorted back, sticking his nose up in the air in proud defiance.

“It's your heritage too and it's not expensive at all! If it's only a matter of money, I will pay for it!”

“Spend it on decent suits and a fine restaurant!” France bit back, taking his fiancée once again by his collar and glaring at him.

“I'm not spending money for something that I will wear only once!” England yelled in return, freeing himself from his fiancée’s grip and pinning France down on the floor. “And it will be an English restaurant!”

“French, *bon sang!*” France countered, attempting to defend himself. “English restaurants shouldn't even be allowed to be called that!!”

“Now fucking stop this!!!” America screamed at the top of his lungs, grabbing both his parents by the collar of their suits and separating them by plain force. “There will be only us and Germany, if you wish to invite only those who already know! What's the point in fighting about the wedding!?”

“If he doesn't want me, I don't want him!” France protested, attempting to grab a hold of England's tie to strangle him with it.

“Likewise!” England yelled back, going for France’s hair but being similarly unsuccessful in reaching it.

“Stop tricking one another, we can't stand you anymore!!” America interrupted them eventually, glaring at both of them in turns. “Sit down and discuss your problems already!”

Both older countries bit their lower lip and pretended to calm down, earning only America's deep sigh for their weak attempt. Before they could resume once again their fight, America then made them sit on two surviving chairs and put some blank papers and two pens in front of them.

“Here, I'm leaving you alone to plan your fucking wedding. If you argue once again, I swear that I'll tell everyone why you are fighting like this and then you will just *have to* invite everyone. Or kill off one another, whichever suits you better!”

That said, America left them alone in the room, taking care to slam the door loudly behind himself.

Once again alone, England was the first one to sigh deeply.

“What are we doing, France? We can't agree on anything!”

“Let's cancel everything.” France offered, his voice almost breaking. “America is right, we're annoying people for something no one will ever know about...”

“We could tell the truth to the others, instead. It would ease part of the tension?” England proposed as an alternative, completely ignoring his fiancée's suggestion.

France kept silent, though, as he stared at the white paper in front of him.

“Is there *really* something to tell the others about? We're not a couple...”

England's heart broke at his fiancée's quiet words.

“How can you say this? We're a family—”

“But not a couple. We never compromised on anything, that's why we can't agree on even the smaller things.” France interrupted him, sounding extremely sad. “We feel love for one another, have sex, take care of the kids... But about being a couple, we have nothing to reveal to the world, because we barely do what couples are supposed to do...”

England stood up silently, making France fear that it was the end of everything. The island nation, however, just took his hand in his own and pulled him up on his feet, making them stand so close that their chests touched.

France averted his eyes and England didn't say a thing, he just left a small kiss on his cheek and led him outside the room. As they walked down the long corridor, apparently directed outside, France tried to free his hand from England's grip, but his fiancée just entwined their fingers together instead.

France's heart raced in his chest, both at the strange sensation of holding hands with England in public – had they really never done it in one-thousand years together? - and at the fear of being seen by some of the other nations.

Overwhelmed by the feeling, France could just stare down at his feet, face red in deep embarrassment. If England had proposed sex during a meeting in front of everyone, he would have probably felt less embarrassed and certainly less nervous.

Maybe England himself would let him go if they met someone, he tried to convince himself, but that didn't make him any less apprehensive.

“Hi Italy, Norway,” England greeted when France was almost certain they would make it outside the palace without repercussions. The French nation tried to escape once again the handholding, but England simply held him tighter. “Is the NATO meeting still going on?”

Fuck, there was no way they would not notice it.

“We were having lunch break actually!” Italy answered cheerfully. “Are you guys joining us? The buffet will start in a short while~”

“I was actually going to bring France out for lunch,” England answered conversationally. “We might join you back in the afternoon, though.”

“Do you really?” Italy cheered happily, searching his too many pockets for something. “Are you going out on a date?”

France’s heart stopped in his chest at the direct question, and he silently hoped for England's deadpans and sarcasm to save the day.

It was quite easy, after all. His own mind could supply a quite large amount of reasons why eating out together could be reasonable.

*‘Oh no, I just wanted to torture the frog with your food. You know how he gets when your people actually think your way of cooking things is better than his...’*

Yes, it was extremely easy. Moreover, they have salvaged the secrecy of their relationship in even worse ways and everyone had believed them.

Then why was France panicking in earnest? Maybe *he* should be the one answering Italy...

He had no time to say a word or even offer a fake laugh to his cousin, though, since England moved first, showing their entwined fingers in case the other two nations hadn't noticed.

“Yes, indeed. I noticed a nice restaurant on our way here.”

England's facial expression betrayed nothing at all, even when he offered Italy an innocent smile. France, on the other hand, felt like dying.

In the meanwhile, Italy had finally found out the cardholder he was searching for and opened it, making it roll down to the couple's feet.

“Wait, wait, I have the right place for you!” with practiced ease, he retrieved amongst the thousands cards he had collected the one he wanted and offered it to England. “This is cosy and traditional, the perfect romantic place! It's no more than ten minutes from here~”

England took the card Italy was offering him and read it quietly to himself, attempting to memorise the address before putting it in the breast pocket of his suit.

“Thank you Italy, I owe you one,” England thanked his fellow nation, receiving only a kind smile from him.

“Just make Big Brother France cook your catering buffet next time we are having a meeting at yours. Please~?” Italy answered innocently, making England swear and France chuckle lightly.

“We have better go or we'll never be back in time!” England announced, attempting to maintain a cool aura despite Italy's words.

The scene was too much for France to take, therefore he just draped himself around England's arm adoringly.

"Yep, let's go, *Angleterre!*" France offered happily, kissing him on his cheek and thus making England blush even redder.

The couple then exited the building, leaving behind them Italy still weaving them hello and a highly traumatised Norway.

If Norway had any intention of joining the EEC, it died that day.

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The small Italian restaurant Italy had suggested them was really as cosy and romantic as advertised and also relatively empty. Foreign language was not a problem, apparently, since France easily proved to be fluent in Italian, much to England's dismay.

The problem wasn't obviously that France spoke Italian –hell, Corsica spoke certainly more Italian than French– but that he was honestly willing to speak it, something that never happened with English. Predictably, however, as soon as the waitress proved to understand enough French to do her work, he promptly switched back to his own language.

Bloody Frenchman.

Not being a big expert, England left any decision about ordering to his fiancée and then they prepared themselves to wait for their food... or in other words, to have the dreaded confrontation they had been unwilling to have until now.

They waited, however, until their bottle of Cabernet arrived before daring to start, just to have something strong to rely on in case the discussion progressed badly.

"Are you angry?" England asked France, as soon as the waitress was gone.

"I should be the one asking you this." France admitted honestly and tiredly. "I have been taking my weariness out on you and I said some horrible things."

"I did the same. I was even worse than you."

"Arthur, I told you we should get separate ways—"

"But *I* made you say that!" England pointed out quietly. "I'm sorry for leaving all the romanticism to you. I never realised that, even though you are the nation of love, love is supposed to go both ways. And I'm sorry for taking you for granted."

France listened silently to his words and kept staring at him, obviously waiting for the one excuse he needed to hear the most.

"And sorry that I can't leave Alfred be. In my defence, however, I must say that I'm just working with him at the moment."

"You are considerably apprehensive, and this is putting it mildly," France corrected him plainly. "I reprimand him too, but you get almost hysterical."

"I know, I'm sorry." England repeated. "But he has completely fallen out of my radar and now he has the attention of everyone on him... If he was in the commonwealth, my name would still be behind him, but now..."

"He is independent, Arthur." France pointed out. "And strong. You should worry more about yourself: not everyone likes that you are always siding with Alfred, why do you think De Gaulle opposed England's entry in the EEC?"

"Because he is ungrateful. He stayed in London during the whole WWII with the rest of your government and now he says we are dependent on America!"

"Are you?" France asked back.

"Francis, Alfred is too young..." England tried to give an account for himself, but then just sighed in resignation as he realised it was a lost cause. "You are right, is not healthy. But I think the real problem is what you said today."

"What mean truth did I uncover?" France asked curiously, taking his fiancée's hand in his.

"We're not a couple, Francis. I fret about letting my children and my colonies go, mostly because I don't have what I really need in my life." England explained. "We've been putting us aside for too long."

"Arthur, please, you could have turned me your dominion seven years ago and you refused!"

"I told you and Alfred that tons of times, but you must know that I love you too much to just go and do that. *You* at least, Alfred still is too much of a child." England clarified. "I don't want a formal marriage between two nations when our sovereigns say so, I want something that we will decide on our terms, even if we take ten years to reach a conclusion that's fine with both of us."

"Then what was before, with Italy and Norway?"

"My compromise." England answered staring back at France. "I still want a private marriage, but it doesn't need to be a secret and it doesn't need to not have also a formal recognition. What I want to make clear is that *we* are marrying, not just what we represent."

France smiled at England's words, but had no real chance to answer that their orders arrived, the rich aroma of lasagne filling their nostrils. They quietly began eating, until France finally managed to find the proper words to answer England.

"It might be nice to have a romantic ceremony, I think." France offered after a while.

"Is that *your* compromise?" England asked, raising a surprised eyebrow at his fiancée.

"If you keep being this nice there might be more," France offered, looking up at him from under his long eyelashes and winking at him.

"Is it really that easy to manipulate you?" England asked with a small chuckle.

"I wouldn't call it easy since you tried it today for the first time!"

"French romance-wise, it really is the first time. Especially with the other nations' knowledge," England admitted. "And here I thought we had nothing left to try..."

"You were cute today, while I talked with Italy," England continued, taking his chance to smirk at his lover. "It's hard deciding if I want more to show you off or to keep you all by myself..."

"I'm leaving it up to you, but you know I've nothing against being shown off!"

"Who would have guessed it?" England teased back, proceeding to finish off his meal.

When he checked the time, he noticed that they still had a whole hour before the afternoon session began. They could use up their time deciding how to go about it, if nothing else.

"What about having an ice cream while having a walk around here?" England proposed eventually.

"Might be a good idea. That way it won't stick on my hips~" France agreed with a wink in England's direction, cleaning elegantly the corners of his mouth with his napkin.

"Fat never sticks on your hips, Francis. For how much sugar you eat you strangely manage to not get one ounce fatter!"

"I work out!" France leered, offering his lover another flirty wink. "Besides, my sweets are small and delicious. I can't understand why Alfred can't be satisfied with more artistic and less caloric food..."

"I agree on the artistic side, if we speak about French food, but don't try talking to me about less caloric. If you could, you would live off cheeses and meat!"

"I'm famous for my salads too, *Angleterre*. And my average portions are less than a half than America's!"

"I can't really deny that."

Both parents just sighed loudly thinking back at their current lack of influence on their son.

"He was so cute when he was a child..." England whined, his eyes getting teary.

"I managed to make him eat properly, whenever I was with him," France sighed, still maintaining his cool and dignity as he stood up. "Fuck the meeting, let's go drink!"

"I can get over it," England sniffled. "Besides, we have other things to discuss!"

“Such as?”

“Burning Canada's Bill of rights, just to be on the safe side," England answered seriously as he stood up to stare with fiery determination into France's eyes.

“Let's pay the bill, Arthur. You're scaring me," was the only answer France granted to his possessive fiancée at that point.

“I'll pay for you," England announced quietly, then, quickly walking to the counter before France attempted to protest.

“Arthur?”

“C'mon Francis, don't be a bother," England cut short, glad that his intention had been clear enough that the mangled Italian he could manage got him through the paying without problems.

Before exiting the restaurant, England turned to France and waited for him to walk before him, having care to keep the door open for him.

France blushed scarlet and looked around himself, only to notice the confused stares on them of the restaurant owner. If possible, he turned even redder and rushed out of the place, eager to get some fresh air.

He waited for England to reach for him, but found himself unable to look at him in the eyes. He tightened his arms around his waist, then, and just looked at the road in front of them.

“S-so, what are we doing now?”

“Francis Bonnefoy," England told him reproachfully, placing himself in front of his fiancée so that France was bound to look at him, “*République Française*," He tried again, not receiving an answer.

France jumped slightly hearing his proper name pronounced by England, and finally stared back at him, looking like the epitome of the embarrassment. England smirked at the sight and brought their lips together in a firm kiss.

As they separated, England took once again a firm hold of France's hand and led him down the street, to the opposite sides where the meeting palace was.

“W-where are we going?” France asked, attempting to keep up with England's speed.

“To get that ice-cream we talked about!" England explained, tugging France against him. “You have no idea what seeing you like this does to me."

“Like what?” France countered, pouting at him.

“Shy, embarrassed," England explained. “I've never seen you actually looking like this, you usually just *pretend* to be. Did I really never hit on you out in the open? You certainly did, even in front of the others..."

"Well, I have a reputation to uphold!"

"Hit on everyone and sleep with no one?"

"I sleep with the only one that matters, *mon amour*," France countered acidly, grimacing at the joke.

"I hope so..." England said back, only then realising one more thing he didn't excuse himself for. "By the way, I'm sorry for calling you a slut."

"This just means I was right in calling you a dick!" France grinned back at England, making him sigh in irritation.

"Why do I keep loving you?" England enquired, despite tightening his grip on France to fully enjoy the warmth of his lover's body pressed against his.

"Because I'm adorable?"

"Hardly," England countered, stopping near an ice-cream shop. "I suggest a rational division of duties: you order and I pay."

"Why would you keep paying?" France countered, unaccustomed not to pay himself or sharing.

"Today is my treat. I'm allowed to be nice to my fiancée once in a while, am I not?"

France didn't answer and just went to order two vanilla and chocolate ice creams, barely managing to stop his lips from curling into a happy smile. England followed him, waiting to pay the food before joining once again France outside. The Frenchman then draped himself at his side, starting to eat his ice cream.

"Are we really doing this, then?" He asked unsurely.

"Are we not? I really would like that," England offered. "A beautiful ceremony in the woods, near a lake with all my friends would be awesome..."

"Just the two of us alone you mean, then," France teased, earning England's light punch of reprimand on his head.

"You have some nerve saying things like this. Without my magic we wouldn't have America and Canada!"

"It's so easy to rile you up, you know England?" France teased. "I'm extremely grateful to your magic... And to you in general. It has been a nice date."

"I'm glad you liked today... We are always doing things together, therefore I never really noticed how I never took the initiative whenever we're in public."

"It's not like I would doubt your love for me just because you don't do it." France pointed out sincerely. "If you were romantic to me, it would be obvious that we're together."



"But you'd like it," England pointed out. "I've never seen you make an expression like that one, I almost fell in love all over again..."

"What's with you now!" France protested, tightening his grip on his fiancée. "You've never been this adorable~!"

"You neither," England teased, kissing him on his cheek. "What would you like for the wedding, contract-wise?"

"I want to link it to the *Entente Cordiale*," France told him without even thinking about it. "It has meant a lot to me during these years, much more than what I thought possible..."

"We can't really backdate the marriage, France—"

"But we can marry the eighth of April," France explained, detaching from his fiancée to walk slightly in front of him as he finished off the last bits of his ice cream. "My current government isn't too much fond of you, waiting for something better would just be losing time..."

England attempted to read his fiancée the best he could as he kept munching on his cone.

"Do you fear it won't get better?" He asked eventually.

"Not at all, I just don't want to wait," France reassured him. "Besides, I really will never find something better of the *Entente Cordiale*!"

England took his chance to grab France's hand and make his lover face him properly.

"France, let's get married my way for now and link the date to the *Entente Cordiale*, but wait some time before we make it official," England proposed him.

"That's unfair, *Angleterre*!" France protested. "It's like I'll get married to you but not vice versa..."

"Trust me, France!" he pleaded once again. "I got a wonderful idea, I'm just so slow that I didn't think about it before..."

"Alright..." France accepted dubiously, tightening his hold on England's hand. "Let's go back to the meeting, then. After it, we'll tell America and Canada."

"And I'll ring Seychelles. She will be delighted to have finally the chance to dig out her wardrobe the dress she brought seven years ago."

"You might need to arrange it, though. She has grown in these last few years..."

"Well, we have three more months to arrange my share, I'm sure it will be enough time to arrange whatever she would like to wear..."

They both smiled happily at one another and finally went back to the palace where the NATO conference was held.

Awkwardly enough, when they got back to the meeting no nation asked them a single thing. They just seemed to be quite pleased that for once their fighting didn't go overboard and they didn't need to close them in the separate room even for the afternoon session. It felt like either they had feared too much for consequences that weren't going to happen, or simply Italy and Norway had been too ingenious in hiding the news –or too traumatised to do something about it.

Before the after-meeting party Italy had organised, England and France had given the good news to their children. At first, they had just thought about calling Seychelles and wait until after the party to tell America and Canada, but eventually they found themselves glad that they had chosen to tell the boys before the party started.

During the whole evening, in fact, America had just been attached to Japan's tails, molesting him even more than what he did with Canada.

Even worse, when everything had ended, the young nation had just offered his parents a big grin and told them that he was going to be busy for another hour or so with his new friends. Somehow, that news crushed their delusions of America still being just their cute child and made both nations feel extremely old.

While they were returning to their hotel, then, France and England took their chance to stop by the nearest open winery, so that they could drown their anxiety into the alcohol. Only when France felt nicely tipsy and England utterly drunk they resumed their way towards the hotel they were staying in, France bringing a wining England on his back.

"I knew somethin' like dis was goin' to happen," England sniffled against his lover's shoulder. "He was so cute as a child... Why did he have to grow up... And try something with a grandpa three times *our* age..."

"Don't drool on my jacket, *Angleterre*, I need it!" France countered, sighing loudly. He hated seeing his fiancée like this, but honestly the implication of America's attitude had shocked him too. Since when America had begun hitting on Japan? Had they been too lost fighting between each other not to notice their son was growing?

"You can't tell me that you're alright with this!"

"I'm not, but I wonder if we just missed the signals because we fight too much or if America willingly attempted to keep us out..."

France just felt his fiancée tightening his grip around his neck.

"We are loud, and Japan is really the quiet one," England acknowledged. "I don't think we would have noticed the way we are..."

"You're a smart drunk, my love."

"Why are you not speaking French, now?"

"Something tells me that you wouldn't understand a word in your condition..."

England just snorted and relaxed on France's back, dozing off and proving France's point.

It was going to be a long night for the Frenchman.

---

In the meantime, the dismantled Axis and America had gone drinking as well.

It was a noisy bar that offered food even at a late hour, and it had interested America... who ordered several portions of French fries like a starved man; while they waited for America's fries, Germany's beer, Italy's *aglio, olio e peperoncino* pasta and Japan's water to go with his painkillers, America went to call his brother and sister.

"Sorry for the delay," he prompted as soon as he had returned, dipping a bunch of fries into a small bowl of ketchup. "I had to wrap up some family business~"

"Something happened with Matthew?" Germany asked worriedly. "He looked fine to me today... the few times I noticed him."

"Nah, it's just good news I can't tell," America giggled happily, dipping another fry into the ketchup only to point it to Japan's lips. "C'mon, say aaahn!"

"Alfred-san, you really shouldn't—" Japan had no time to finish reprimanding America that the younger nation put the fried potato straight into his mouth, forcibly making him eat it.

Japan glared outraged at America's sly move, but finished eating the fried potato anyway.

"How cute!" America cried out, obviously enjoying himself.

"Please, restrain yourself from doing this kind of thing," Japan requested with dignity, despite stealing another fry, this time eating it by his own free will.

"I'm sure I can guess the reason for Alfred's joy," Italy sing-sang, as he filled his mouth with a forkful of pasta.

Germany panicked and stared with wide eyes at Italy, whilst Japan simply looked at him curiously. America, on the other hand, appeared just full of himself.

"Mwahahaaa!! You sure can't, Feliciano!" America yelled loudly, taking his chance to order a bottle of Cola and some other fries.

Unfortunately, he had already passed by several units the daily hamburger limit Japan had suggested him in his desperate attempt to help him with his diet, so he had no strength of will to get a dozens of those. No matter how both nations knew that America would never be able to follow through the loose schedule.

"Big Brother Francis and Arthur must have finally decided on a date for the wedding, didn't they?" Italy guessed innocently, not even looking up from his plate of pasta.

The other three nations stared in silence at him for quite some time, only the noise of Italy's slurping some loose spaghetti up in his mouth filling the room.

"How the hell would you know!???" America yelled at the top of his lungs.

"Wait, is he right?" Germany asked, feeling sensibly ill at the news.

He had to be nice to France, he had to be nice to France, he had to be nice to France... hell, he *had to* be nice to France or England would destroy him the next time.

"He is indeed," America confirmed, much to Japan's shock.

Italy looked finally up at his friends surprised, not really understanding their reactions.

"Was it supposed to be a secret? Today they were also holding hands before going on their date~"

"If it was Francis-san calling their lunchtime together a date, however, it might be not true." Japan pointed out, somehow unable to think such an event as possible.

"It wasn't Big Brother, it was Arthur!" Italy countered with an offended pout, making America spit half of the Cola he had drank in the meanwhile.

"I can't believe da- I mean, that Arthur did this!!" America yelled.

"You can ask Norway, he was there too," Italy revealed, earning all the three other nations just staring back at him mouth gaping.

"I-Italy, you don't look surprised... *Since when* did you know that they are together?" Germany asked eventually. "This would have been a vital information during the wars, at least not to risk being burn to ashes by Arthur..."

"Was it?" Italy asked quietly, crooking his head to the side in surprise. "I know about that since basically forever, it was more than just obvious~"

"O-obvious?" Japan asked, still unable to believe the news. "*Where* and *how* would it be obvious? They just yell at one another!"

"And yet they are always together," Italy pointed out matter-of-factly. "I can't remember when I had the final proof of that, but I remember that since we were little Big Brother was always talking about Arthur and cooking things for him. Not to mention that he disappeared regularly to go to him. Grandfather was really worried at the time~"

"Grandfather?" America asked, surprised discovering that there was a member of the family he had never heard about.

“Uhn,” Italy confirmed. “He was so worried about Big Brother. He feared that he would become less refined if he kept hanging around with barbaric nations... Or so he said, even though he kept always going to have drinks with Germania...”

“Barbaric nations?” America asked, obviously not understanding even the concept.

“You don't know much about history, don't you Alfred?” Japan asked eventually, noticing his lover's lack of understanding on the subject.

“Arthur and Francis tried to teach me, but it seems that I'm refractory to that subject too! Haha!” America admitted, while slurping noisily another glass of Cola. “It's actually becoming a problem with Francis, since he can't understand what use my technology has for him and I can't understand what use world history has for me...”

“Maybe you just need a different way to approach it.” Japan offered kindly, earning an inquisitive slurp from the American nation. “Leave it to me, I'm sure I can match technology, fun and European history and literature!”

“My saviour!!!” America yelled, as he threw his arms around Japan's neck. “I adore you, you know it Japan?”

“It's nice being reminded of that,” Japan accepted sympathetically the praise. “However, I must ask: am I the only who didn't know that those two were together?”

“I discovered it quite painfully during the last World War,” Germany explained, drowning his distress into his beer. “I just hope they won't get worse... Arthur is already scary enough as he is...”

“It will be something like half a wedding, considering what Francis explained to me,” America revealed, “I don't understand why they're making it so complex, but they certainly don't lack the time. Besides, they spent the last seven years fighting over this damn marriage... If this way they are both alright, all the better!”

“How come you know everything about their plans? This looks more than just being invited to the ceremony,” Japan asked conversationally, unexpectedly making America and Germany turn pale.

“Well... Actually... I...” America stuttered embarrassedly.

“Because they are blood related, obviously!” Italy explained instead, as he finished off the last of his pasta. “Parents and son~”

More silence followed, making him turn surprised at all the other shocked nations.

“Was that supposed to be a secret too?” He asked, then.

“*How* would you know!?” America yelled eventually, utterly shocked.

“I looked at you and your brother!” Italy answered innocently. “It's not that difficult to figure out~”

America sighed deeply and made himself happy with another mouthful of French fries.

"If I were to tell them this, they would freak out for sure..." he decided.

"Well, if it's any consolation, the fact that no one ever said a thing on the matter might mean that everyone was simply alright with it!" Italy pointed out. "It would be stranger if no one realised things had progressed that way~"

"Progressed?" The three other nations asked in unison.

"Some of us were raised in the same house for a while, and we all always went to one another's in the course of history," Italy explained. "You *must* know how Big Brother Francis is when he has his mind on someone or something, it's *hard* to miss..."

Unfortunately, they all knew quite well what Italy was talking about.

America eventually stood up, and left some money on the counter before taking Japan's hand in his.

"We've better be off for the night. I'm dreading about any kind of conversation with my parents from now on, and I need to come to terms with the news myself."

Japan bowed to the others and gave his goodbyes to his friends, following America outside.

Left alone in the bar, Germany and Italy could just sigh and hope that everything went well.

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**T.B.C.**

## A Celtic half-marriage

Eventually, America couldn't find the courage to tell his parents that half Europe probably knew of their family situation and instead preferred focusing, together with his brother and sister, on the upcoming half marriage –the workings and the specifications of which, in fact, worried them quite a bit.

A wedding near a river inside the forest sounded quite nice, but none of them had any idea of what this would realistically entail, especially considering that they kept adding *ancient* and *pagan* as random adjectives to describe it and none of them understood what they were referring to. Fearing England's reaction, the three siblings went asking France for suggestions about at least what to wear.

The French nation, all too kindly, brought them to the very back of his walk-in closet and showed them a long light blue dress decorated in golden trims, complete with a ruffled white collar and a black ribbon, explaining them that he was going to brush off some dust from his old Norman attire.

America and Canada just stared flabbergasted at their father, whilst Seychelles cooed in delight and asked to borrow one for her, noticing how France seemed to have that kind of dress in several colours and variations.

In particular, a smaller green one caught the younger nations' attention, since that style of clothing seemed to have been used by a way taller person. When France explained them that it was what he had made England wear while he had conquered him in 1066, the two twins lost any hope that asking any one of their parents for feasible suggestions would be productive at all.

Therefore, they left Seychelles with France to decide which dress she would like to borrow for the ceremony and, when the dreaded day actually came, they both took out from their wardrobe the oldest suit they had and that still fit them, hoping it to be good enough. As they followed their parents' instructions to get to the small pagan altar in the forest, however, they felt like they were dressed in a futuristic manner, no matter how old fashion their brown and beige suits were.

"Mom? Dad? Are you already here?" Canada called out in a feeble voice, as they finally heard the sound of water running.

"They will never hear you, bro-" America stopped midsentence, as his brother opened up their way to an open space that looked exactly like the place where their parents were supposed to be arranging the ceremony.

"America!! Canada!! You finally came!!" Seychelles greeted them, rushing towards them to hug their waist tight.

As they took their chance to have a look at their sister, they noticed that she had truly decided to borrow one of young France's dresses. Instead of England's green one –probably too small

to be arranged in any way- their French father had apparently found out a red one trimmed in white laces. Certainly, England had worked on it to make it fit their more petite little daughter, because it suited her perfectly and nothing gave away the fact that it had been originally tailored for a taller boy. Also her dark hair wasn't tightened in two ponytails anymore, but were falling in gentle waves down her back, with a big red ribbon placed on the top of her head.

"You look really nice, sis~" America offered her, hugging her back.

"Aww!! Thank you!" She cheered happily, before turning to Canada. "And you? What do you think, Canada?"

"Loose hair suits you a lot, Seychelles," Canada answered her with a kind smile, "it's a pity that there isn't someone else admiring you except us... isn't Monaco coming?"

"Mum told me that Monaco refused the invite," Seychelles admitted sadly, her pink lips pursing in a sad pout. "She isn't much a fan of deep forests and dirty rivers, or so she said..."

"She isn't much a fan of England, she meant." America guessed, rising his eyebrow at his sister, who could only shrug in resignation.

"Poor mum..." Canada sighed, shaking his head in disappointment.

"There will be time to deal with that later on," England interrupted them, as he walked towards his children. "It's just half of the actual marriage, after all."

He was dressed in a simple white sleeveless tunic with a long green cape, two big golden brooches holding the two pieces of his attire firmly together.

"I see you didn't follow your mother's suggestions," He teased his boys. "You look fine."

"Dad, you look—" Canada started, not really knowing how to convey his feelings. "*Old.*"

"He looks quite young in my opinion," France's voice came from behind the altar he was adorning with red roses and white lilies. "He was half my height when he wore that style of clothing."

As he moved forwards to reach them, Canada and America were certain to have in front of them a beautiful girl. The style of the dress was the same of the ones France had showed them at his apartment, but the colour was pure white, as pure white were the lilies that decorated the lower part of his hairdo. If they didn't know that he was their father, they would have bet France was one of England's fairies.

"Woah, mum. You're stunning!" Canada offered, shocked to even be able to say that aloud. Still, he couldn't really deny that it was true.

"Thank you, *mon cher!*" France thanked him with an overconfident wink, everything in his mannerisms showing that he knew just how good he looked.



"N-no wonder dad fell for you, i- if this is how you looked like when you were y- young!" America stuttered, unable to stop blushing.

"America, don't fall for your mother," England teased him with a smart grin while France just laughed at the reaction he had gotten from his sons.

"Less flowers and more ribbons, but I've always been quite a beauty," He explained with a wink. "I need help to decide where to put the red roses on your father, though..." France added pensively. "Any suggestion?"

Despite his words, he picked one of the red roses he still had in his basket and placed it behind his fiancée's left ear, before admiring his work.

"This is cute~" He cooed happily, making England blush.

"I- I'm not girlish like you!" England protested, making Canada and Seychelles chuckle at his response.

"Still, you like me, *non*?" France teased, gloating even more seeing how England could just scoff in answer.

"So does America, apparently," Canada whispered to his sister, earning a complicit nod for it.

"He must have taken after dad," Seychelles approved.

"Oi, you two!" both America and England protested, managing to make all the three other nations plainly laugh at their irritation.

"Shall we move on, now that we are all here?" France proposed, showing his family a pearly grey pebble. "I announce to you that, despite all my atheism, I can offer my own piece of ancient tradition: admire the infamous Franc pebble!"

"You mix things because you keep forgetting pieces of your history!" England protested, taking out a golden cord from behind his sash. "You are dressed Norman, you should play it like you were Christian."

"Oi, Normans got converted *after* getting to Europe!" France countered, crossing his arms on his chest. "You should study also history that's not your own!"

"Why should I study your conquest of me?" England lamented, putting his hand on his hips and staring at France reproachfully, understanding the hidden meaning of what he had said only when he saw France's wide grin staring back at him. "No, I mean-"

England blushed deeply and tried to move a couple of steps behind, in order to distance himself from his fiancée. France, however, was quick jumping on him to tackle him on the ground, his basket of flowers forgotten on the soft grass.

"Precisely because of that, *mon amour*!! You're too cute!" France pointed out merrily, holding England tight and rubbing his head against his chest. Miraculously, his hairdo remained intact.

“France!!” England protested, attempting to get free from France’s grip and teasing touches. “The ceremony—”

“Oh, right, that comes first,” France offered his lover with leer, grinning lasciviously at him.

“Mum, please...” Canada groaned in desperation, as Seychelles busied herself making plenty of photos of the couple.

Seeing his daughter taking pictures, France smiled up at the camera, finally giving England the chance he was searching for to push him away from him.

“Ouch!!” France moaned, pouting at his fiancée, who had stood up once again to brush away dirt and grass from his white tunic. “You’re a punk, *Angleterre!*”

“Keep your hands on *your* pebbles, my love,” England told him harshly, despite offering him his hand to help him standing.

France pouted even more, but eventually took his fiancée hand and let England helping him up.

“You’re so *not* cute...!”

“Let’s begin, idiot,” England proposed, turning his back to France not to make him notice the light blush that had appeared on his cheeks. “I was under the impression that you wanted to get married.”

France groaned in annoyance, fixed his dress and hair, and then followed England to where the altar stood in all its ancient pride.

“Isn’t anyone coming to officiate the ceremony?” America asked surprised.

“It’s not really necessary in a pagan setting like ours,” England explained, positioning himself in front of the ancient stone decorated with their flowers as he looked in front of himself towards France. “We have you guys and one another, it’s more than enough.”

“We are mixing up a bounce of our ancient traditions, it’s not like we are following one precisely. Besides, even if we had chosen one in particular, it wouldn’t have been something that still exists or that it’s still structured the way we remember it,” France added, staring back at England himself and retrieving a second pebble from his tunic before placing both of them at the base of the ceremonial stone.

“It would be impossible picking one and foregoing another,” England agreed, checking the cord he was still holding for resistance. “We’ve gone through too many to show favouritisms towards one over another.”

“Yeah tell your fairy friends that this is why I like my current lack of bother,” France teased England with a big smirk that was all teeth. “I know they are here!”

“Shut it, France,” England growled at him, offering his fiancée his hand to take. “Considering that you are supposed to be the nation of love, you’re utterly unromantic!”

“It’s romantic bothering you~” France offered England graciously his hand, smiling adoringly back at him.

“Mum, dad,” Canada took his chance to reprimand his parents tiredly, “if this is supposed to be your wedding ceremony, you are ruining it by fighting!”

Both parents turned to stare at Canada and then looked once again at one another. As soon as their eyes met, however, they soon blushed scarlet and looked elsewhere, despite tightening their hold on their end of the cord.

Seychelles stared at her parents for a while before running towards them to hold tightly France by his waist.

“You can do it! We’re here for you!” she offered, smiling up at her parents.

Canada quickly understood his sister’s intuition and stared back at America, who was currently staring at the scene looking quite lost. Canada grabbed a hold of America’s hand and made his brother turn his gaze back to him.

“We need a hero,” he explained in a soft voice, “shall we go?”

America smiled awkwardly at his brother and nodded, allowing Canada to bring him to their parents. Canada mirrored their sister’s approach hugging England close, but apparently it wasn’t enough to make America find a way to fit himself in.

Canada and Seychelles, then, shared a quick glance between one another and took America’s hands in theirs, one each, managing to form a reassuring half circle around their parents.

“We are here to support you,” Canada explained, smiling widely at his parents, who were staring at their kids in a mix of surprise and emotion. Both of them offered their children a strained smile as they attempted not to cry and failed miserably at it.

“You really *are* something else entirely,” England sniffled, drying his tears of joy with the back of his bare arm.

“We’ve better start before these rascals make us more a mess than we already are,” France offered, smiling back at England.

“Right,” England agreed, as he offered France one of the ends of his golden cord, taking the other one firmly in his. “But not before I do another thing first, come here...”

England tugged his side of the cord to make France bend slightly towards him. Before France could understand England’s intentions, he felt his fiancée’s soft lips over his, sheer electricity running down his spine as soon as they kissed. He closed his eyes to savour the kiss better, and soon after the energy he had felt running through his body reached even his brain and his retinas.

He opened his eyes at the odd sensation and soon he noticed that he could actually see behind England some dozens of fairies and different kind of spirits. In particular, a small group of them caught his attention and he smiled at them.

*“Ravi de vous revoir, mes cheries,”* France offered courteously, earning surprised looks from the rest of his family and heavy blushes from the group of fairies.

The only one who understood what was happening was England, as soon as he looked behind himself and had noticed the French fairies swooning after France had greeted them.

“It worked, then,” England noticed gladly, smiling back at France. “I feared that your bloody Enlightening had turned you refractory to your own magic too...”

“Nah... Everything works properly, it seems,” France answered, taking a moment to check his ability to move properly his whole body. When he was certain that nothing felt hindered, he focused on the cord he was holding and was glad to see it turning a pale blue hue, thanks to the magic he had managed to guide inside it. “Perfect, I should say. Let’s begin, *Angleterre*, I’m not really made for this kind of things...”

England nodded and infused the string with his own magic, making the golden cord shine in a bright violet glow. After that, he moved the cord so that the middle of it was placed right over their joined hands and made the cord do a full circle around their hands, starting the process that would bind them together.

“Spirits, desires, present and future, that's what a marriage tie together," England stated solemnly. “For nations like us it gets even more so, because we shoulder our personal past, but also the ones of our children.”

“For me and you, however, it is even more different,” he resumed his speech, swallowing hard as his stare focused on his lover. “Because we've also always shouldered one another's past, from the first day we’ve met.”

France then made his half of the cord tighten around their hands with another loop, slightly towards his wrist.

“The ties that had always tightened us together have always been like this cord, and like this cord they represent the double nature of relationship,” France continued, already feeling slightly dizzy because of the magic they were using. “Strength, power and honours, but also deception, violence and defeat. We’re everything and its opposite.”

England proceeded fastening their hands once more mirroring what France had done before him.

“And everything is precious, like a golden thread that hurts but never breaks," England started once again, “because from those flames that brought us many deaths, also love and care were born.”

France tightened again the cord around his wrist, before starting on his following vow.

“What happened in the past, will happen also in the future. No matter what will happen and no matter what our governments will put us through.”

England mirrored France's last fastening, tightening the cord around his own wrist, proceeding to the conclusion himself.

"We will keep being together, because we can't imagine our life apart. Because the stronger our feelings of love and hate become, the less we are able to live apart."

Both nations put the hands that still held the ends of the cord over their fastened one, entwining their fingers together.

"I vow to be forever yours," England promised. "In war and peace, during conquest and disputes—"

"I vow to be forever yours," France's promised back, "in war and peace, during revolutions and recessions."

They closed the space between one another as England finished his part of the ceremony.

"In the country of Great Britain, I'll be your husband and you will be mine. In the country of France, time will prove that I'm the most suited husband for you and that you are the same for me. I promise this to you, France."

France swallowed hearing that vow, and he soon offered his lips for England to kiss.

They had been fast enough, apparently, because as they finally kissed France's pale blue magic left the cord, leaving it shining with only England's faint red halo. France's magic was absorbed once again by England, and the strings glowed violet once again before disappearing completely.

England and France's kiss ended sooner than France would have liked, and when he opened his eyes again, around them all England's friends weren't visible to his eyes any longer.

America, Canada and Seychelles had needed more than just a moment to realise that they were supposed to cheer for their parents and make some photos, too swept away by the romantic aura around them to even pull out the camera.

"It was wonderful!" Seychelles managed to say eventually, sniffing at the scene.

Canada nodded at his sister's words, unable to express his feelings any better than his sister had done, whilst America just stared at them, highly surprised by how even two people like them could manage romance. It was rare to see their parents' emotions so raw and so out in the open... no wonder they had needed their support to voice all that without turning it into a joke.

While their kids attempted to come to terms with the amount of seriousness their parents were going through, France and England separated and unfastened their hands, leaving the French nation finally free to retrieve his pebbles.

"Ready to honour our other pagan heritage?" France eventually offered with a smile, attempting to lighten the mood a little bit.

Despite his better judgement, seeing his half-husband visibly attempting to follow up the plan they had set for the ceremony despite his plain vulnerability made England want to screw his lover senselessly right there, out in the open.

He looked around himself at his fairy friends and at his family and noticed that all them were all still quite distracted and in awe after the exchange of vows of the hand-fastening. It was now or never, England concluded, so he just followed his instincts and threw himself at France, taking him into a deep searing kiss.

England's tongue found soon France's and they began to swirl around one another, touching and exploring greedily every bit of that well known mouth. Energised by the kiss, England pushed France backwards and slammed him against the ancient stone, finally succeeding into his goal to press hard against his half-husband until he made him moan in frustration.

“Dad!!!” America reprimanded him eventually, not understanding what the hell had crossed England's mind to make him react like that all of sudden. It wasn't like they believed their English father loved their French father less, but certainly he had always been less keen to show it.

America's voice was more difficult to ignore than his pixies' loud reprimands, so in the end England let France go, taking however deep satisfaction into seeing his half-husband's dishevelled attire and dark red lips.

“I knew we had to choose marriage by having sex,” he growled in France's ear, making him chuckle.

“You never give me enough credit, *mon amour*,” France teased, kissing his lover gently on his cheek. “However, that would have made us married right after Bouvines. Do you realise that, right?”

“Isn't that kind of true?” England countered, moving slightly to stare back properly at his lover. “My feelings are honestly unchanged since then.”

“We didn't mean it like a marriage back then, though,” France admitted, remembering too well what they had put themselves through at the time.

“We should have,” England countered, smiling evilly at his half-husband. “Imagine if we merged right after Bouvines: with my strength and your resources history would have been ours.”

“Don't speak about merging to me, *Angleterre*, I'm still mad at you!” France countered with dignity. “Shall we move on, though?”

“Yes,” England's agreed, thanking every god he knew about that they were both dressed with skirts that hid their current problem better than a pair of pants.

Much to their kids' relief, he took diligently one of the pebbles from France's hand and stared back at him, waiting for instructions.

"You have to go first," France confirmed, offering him a wide smile.

"Do I? I have no idea about what to say."

"Just make a wish, *Angleterre*," France reassured him. "Form doesn't matter, only your desire to see it done."

England nodded and then he took a deep breath as he walked towards the shore, staring at the clear water of the river.

"Something like *I wish for our family to stay together until the end of history*?" England said, staring back at France for confirmation.

"Not bad at all," France confirmed with a smile, "now give your wish to the river."

England nodded and threw the pebble in the river, as France moved to stand by him.

"The clear water of the river runs down to its mouth and so does history. We are the living proof of that," France said, staring at his half-husband more than at the river. "The water is always different, but it still is water... I wish for our love to be like that: ever-changing, but always love. Always look at me, England, because I will always look at you and be at your side, even when you won't have the courage to ask."

France threw the pebble in the river, finally staring at the river.

"Bring our wishes to the sea, my dear river, to the sea that joins England and France," France concluded, offering his half-husband a soft sad smile. "I love you, *Angleterre*."

England eventually couldn't stop his tears, and hid his face into France's chest as he held him tightly.

"You are a bloody idiot France!" He yelled at him. "So much for I'm not a religious nation, much less pagan!"

France just chuckled at England's remonstrations and petted his head kindly.

"Yes, yes. Now stop crying," he offered, taking his chance to look at his children and discover that all three of them were in a similar state than England.

"Do you wish to join?" France offered them, and in no time America, Canada and Seychelles too rushed in his arms to hug them tightly.

It took them a while to put themselves together, but as soon as they felt calmer they decided to walk back to England's house, in order to allow France and England to change back into their proper clothing.

France had no time to enter England's room, however, that he was soon assaulted once again by a horny Englishman.

Mouths clashed one against the other and before long even their tongues met again, in order to play and tease as much as they liked.

"You know, there's something I've always wanted to do when I was a child," England whispered to his half-husband's lips, grinning evilly at the older nation. "Don't mind if I try it now..."

France had no time to worry about the meaning of England's words that his half-husband had disappeared quickly under his skirt.

"England!!!" France yelled desperately, spontaneously reaching for the higher part of his skirt to pull it down. He found England's head under there, however. He hadn't even calmed down yet, that a gush of cold air met his legs as England pulled down his white tights and get rid of those and his flat shoes.

Caught once again by surprise, France pushed his half-husband's head down to lead him away from between his legs, only to stop frozen on the spot as something wet teased his still partially hardened cock.

"*Merde!*" France swore, as he distinctly felt England's tongue lick and tease him, the tip barely gracing the veins there before moving up to tease his slit as his long fingers played with his balls. Before long, England took him in whole and started to suck in earnest, making France swear and moan in pleasure even louder.

England waited until he felt any sign of resistance leaving France before re-emerging from beneath his skirt. He took a deep breath and then licked his lips clean from France's pre-cum, before standing back up and lean over France to kiss him once again.

He licked his bottom teasingly and found him trembling slightly, so he held France in his arms as he deepened the kiss, allowing his lover to melt in his arms. He helped him down on his bed then and attacked his neck, taking care to keep teasing France's erection beneath his skirt, in order to not allow the cold to freeze down France's excitement.

England moved eventually the skirt up high and placed himself between France's legs, chuckling lightly in France's mouth as he felt his half-husband's hair legs tickle his bare arms.

"I would so much like to take my time with you, France," England whispered in his ear, "it's a pity that we have to be quick—"

"I wouldn't endure much longer," France moaned, breathing heavily as he stared to his side and rummaged with a hand inside the drawer of England's bedside table to search for some lotion. When he found it, he just threw it unceremoniously to England's face. "Go for it," he commanded sharply.

"I'll make you suffer a bit longer, since you're so nice to me," England countered as he rubbed the tip of his nose and retrieved the lotion from where it had fallen. He unscrewed the top and poured on his right hand a nice amount of cream, before he began to tease once again France's cock. All the while, his free hand hungrily caressed France's still clothed side, enjoying the feeling of the soft fabric under his touch. "God, I missed this..."



France chuckled at England's admission and reached for his shoulders to open the brooches that held together his half-husband's mantle and tunic. Seeing the upper part of the tunic fall down to England's waist and leave his chest naked to his hungry eyes, France laughed openly and moved to claim his lips into a searing kiss.

"This is a bloody Greek chiton!" France pointed out, smirking widely at his half-husband who could just answer with an annoyed huff.

"Romans and Celts wore that too, you blasted man," England countered hastily, before kissing his lover once again as he moved his oiled fingers between France's butt cheeks.

France's moaned at the intrusion inside England's mouth, and moved his hands satisfactorily over his half-husband's naked body, before searching lower, under England's own skirt. His cock got even harder as he touched nothing else than his hard length.

"Fuck it, England. You were going commando!" France managed to say aloud, as he moved his lips from England's mouth to his ear shell, in order to tease it properly. "Had I known it, you wouldn't have had your pagan ceremony, *mon cher*..."

"I'm aware of it, my love. Always a pleasure to rile you up..."

Despite the ongoing bickering, England kept scissoring France until he had deemed him ready enough to at least not cry out in pain.

"Be quiet, or the kids will hear you," England admonished as he prepared himself to enter his half-husband.

France had no time to protest that England pushed forwards, literally taking his breath away and making him let out only a strangled cry.

Soon England's soft lips were everywhere on his cheeks and mouth, trailing down his jaw and neck before moving lower to his shoulder, where he took his chance to leave a dark mark. His hands, in the meanwhile, teased France's nipples from over his dress and fondled the hard muscles on his chest, smearing oily lotion all over the pure white fabric.

"You're a punk, *Angleterre*," France protested eventually, loosely noticing the yellow smears of oil on his dress. "A faux gentleman—"

England chuckled at his words and smirked evilly down at him, moving his hands behind France to cup France's butt cheeks in a firm grip and better guide their movements.

"Indeed I am, my Franc-Roman princess. Too bad you're just as much a barbarian as I am, no matter all your finesse," England admitted, whispering huskily in his ear as he moved them so that France's lower back rested more comfortably on his thighs and he could start thrusting inside him in earnest. "You need to dress like this more, I was too young back then to enjoy this kind of attire fully..."

France clenched his teeth, attempting to not let his voice to be heard too much outside the bedroom. Mouth shut and hands gripping tight the sheets for support, his only way of

retaliation was clenching his muscles around England's cock.

England choked down his swearing at the sensation, but attempted to keep up a nice rhythm for the both of them.

"France, touch yourself... please," England asked after some time, as he stared transfixed at his lover.

"Why this— so out of the blue?" France answered in a voice so weak that vaguely remembered Canada's. "If you have some kind of role play playing out in your mind, let me in—"

"I have a few, actually. Many including Britain conquering his former Norman aggressor," England confessed, chuckling lightly. "But this is not the case, not today. I just want to see my lovely husband in all his beauty..."

France groaned at his words but complied with his request all the same, reaching for his throbbing length with precise and teasing touches meant to both give England his show as much as sending himself over the edge. Despite the mind-blowing pleasure, he couldn't help noticing how England's eyes remained glued on his movements.

"Like what you see?" France teased, tightening his grip on himself and stroking faster.

"Fuck it, France—" England swore, as he lost control of himself and his thrusting became even more erratic. "You will make me come!"

"Surprised I obliged you? You're too cute, *Angleterre*~" France managed to say, despite the rocking of England's movements and the building of his own climax. "*A- Angleterre!*"

"France!" England called as he came inside his lover, unable to go on anymore.

France followed soon after, swearing at the warm and sticky feeling of the sperm coating his hand.

As he caught his breath, he looked at his own hand annoyed, earning England's chuckle for it. The island nation let himself fall beside France and took his lover's wrist with his hand to bring his fingers to his own mouth. Without breaking eye contact, he began licking them clean one after another, making his half-husband swallow hard at the seductive gesture.

"England, we really have no time for a second round..." France managed to point out eventually.

"I'll wait for you tonight, then," England answered quietly, like he was just an innocent bystander in all that. "Will you screw me senselessly?"

France rolled his eyes and rolled them over on the bed, so that he could stare at him from above.

"I needed to let out of the tension now, so what we did is fine. Tonight however, my dear England, I'll make pure love to you," he declared with a cunning smirk on his lips, "and

believe me, it will be so romantic and full of complicated implications that you will cry your eyes out even before I make you come~"

That said, he let a flabbergasted England staring at the place he had vacated, while he went having a quick shower.

England had just enough time to picture what France's promises entailed before he realised it would not be the smartest thing to do, with his children downstairs waiting to have lunch with him and his companion.

As he stood up and searched something to wear for France and himself, however, he couldn't stop thinking how great it was having such an arousing lover now finally for himself, and him alone.

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**T.B.C.**

## Being a couple, being a family

America, Canada and Seychelles were all but unaware of what their parents would do as soon as they were alone back at home, so they took their time chatting outside England's home until they heard France yelling at England to '*fucking get out of the shower*'. Only then did they decide that the situation was safe enough to relax.

As France arrived in the kitchen dressed once again in trousers and shirt, despite his relief in seeing his father once again dressed as a male, America found himself sighing aloud.

"It's a pity you changed back," he admitted annoyed.

"Am I good to look at in dresses?" France asked, while he began taking out the meat he had prepared to day before to give it the last cooking it needed.

"Well, obviously you just have to talk and the magic breaks!" America pointed out honestly, unwillingly irritating France with his plain statement.

Canada and Seychelles chuckled at the scene and began setting the table. America noticed them and decided to go and help them, but he was stopped by France's quiet voice calling for him.

"America? Is that why you are hanging around with Japan? Because we're too loud?"

"Uhm?" America asked, staring surprised at his father's back.

"We were just wondering!" France hastened to add, still not turning to watch his son's reaction. "Mostly about why you never said a thing about him..."

"About him?"

"You're together, are you not?"

The plain question left America a bit doubtful about what he was supposed to answer: weren't his personal situation and his family supposed to be separate?

"Well, yes... sort of?" America admitted eventually. "I like being with him, I already told you so."

"You told us that you liked being with him, but not that you were getting serious about it!"

"I didn't think it would be a problem."

"It isn't," France clarified, busying himself with the meat heating up to prevent himself from turning towards America. "You know that it isn't a problem for us, don't you?"

"Well, I sort of guessed so, even though you are honestly hard to figure out..."

“Then... are *we*? Your father and I, I mean.”

“I’m not ashamed of you!” America told him plainly, hoping to have guessed France's speech correctly. “Mom, I just never thought I could put the two things together!”

“You want to call him here, then?” France proposed, attempting to sound as calm as he could manage.

America’s eyes grew larger in surprise and went straight to his father from behind.

“Yes!!” America answered cheerfully. “Thank you, mom!! I'll call him soon!”

France had no real time to turn to stare at his son that had America quickly disappeared to England's study, in order to use the phone privately; seeing his brother’s hasty departure, Canada took his chance to join his father by the stove with the excuse of getting some bread and cut it to slices.

“Mum?” He asked quietly. “When did you find out?”

France took a deep breath and went back focussing on the food he was cooking.

“Last NATO meeting in Italy,” the French nation admitted, before offering his son a strained grin, “your father and I felt quite old, all things considered...”

“I thought you would have put up a fight for many reasons,” Canada admitted candidly, pretending to be too much interested in his bread. “He's way older, he's a former Axis, he attacked America in WWII, dad is possessive, you have age issues....”

Unknown to Canada, each and every reason he uttered managed to stab his father's head each time more violently, until he eventually reached the snapping point.

“Canada!” France reprimanded him. “Is not nice saying these things about your parents!”

“But it's true...” Canada pointed out quietly, making France sigh.

“Yes, love, but aside worry, what are we supposed to do? Is not like we have something to teach others about love, we have enough problems by ourselves as it is. Besides, I personally am the country of love, how could I go against people who loves one another?”

“What about dad, though? He seems usually more up to kill us then let us decide by ourselves...”

“Your father loves you guys,” France countered, “he won't hurt you, no matter what he says!”

“Will he quieten down, now that you’re married?”

“How many years have you known your father, Canada?” France teased, offering his son a complicit wink. “Just tell me first, if you are in doubt.”

"Thanks, dad," Canada offered with a wide grin, before leaving a kind kiss on his French father's cheek before going back to help his sister.

It was not too long after that, that America re-emerged from England's study slamming the door open in triumph.

"He's coming!!" He announced happily. Somehow, all around him all his family could clearly hear the American national anthem.

"Who is?" England asked him curiously, as he descended the last steps of the stairs that lead up to the sleeping quarters.

"Japan, dad!" America announced enthusiastically. "Mom said that I could invite him!"

England rose both his eyebrows at America's words and then stared back for confirmation at his half-husband.

"Wasn't I allowed to do it?" France asked, barely glancing behind himself to check England's reaction to America's news.

"W-well, actually... o-of course you were," England stuttered, walking to his half-husband to talk to him properly with the excuse to check on what he was cooking.

France's question honestly worried him, even more so than his own surprise hearing that France had invited Japan at lunch. It wasn't even something they hadn't talked about, since after the hangover had passed they had discussed at length about America's situation; they had both agreed to do something about it, then, in order to not make America believe that he had to hide like they had done until now.

"What are you cooking?" England asked nonchalantly.

"I'm finishing up what I started yesterday," France answered, turning off the heat under the biggest pan in order to check on the smaller ones filled with different kind of cooked vegetables. "I told you that the preparation was quite long!"

"You are right. What was it? Chicken stewed in wine?"

At that France finally glared back at England in shock.

"*Coq au vin* is *not* just chicken stewed in wine!"

England chuckled at his reaction and took his chance to steal a light peck from his lips.

"Of course love, it's French chicken stewed the French way with French wine. Now is it better?"

"You're mocking me!" France pointed out coldly, proceeding to check the food for taste. Obviously, everything tasted good. He put a lid on everything and took a saucepan filled with oil he had set aside, turned on the heat under it and went to retrieve the potatoes he had sliced and put in cold water before the ceremony.

As he proceeded to dry them properly, England could only stare at his half-husband's movements in pure awe. "I'm sorry you had to cook your own wedding lunch. At least you should have done something easier..."

"Don't be an idiot, *Angleterre*, you know I like cooking. Besides, I was the one proposing it," France reminded him, as he checked the oil for temperature before starting to fry part of the potatoes. "And these dishes are easy enough."

England frowned at France, who felt the need to look up from the frying pan to stare at his half-husband once again instead.

"It's my wedding lunch, *Angleterre*. I might be fine cooking it myself, but I won't be alright with a mere omelette!"

"Alright, alright," England agreed, ending his apologies with a chaste kiss on France's pouting lips, for good measure. "However, as long as you are fine cooking for one more nation, you know you can invite whoever you like, don't you?"

France's eyebrows rose up as his eyes got larger, before he had to give his attention to the frying potatoes again.

"You lost me there, England." France admitted. "Are you telling me that I can tell everyone about us or that your home is my home?"

England blushed deeply at France's words and turned to stare at his children who were currently fighting among the three of them about decorations and sitting arrangements.

"W-well, I... what's the point in marrying if my home stays mine and doesn't become *ours*...? I- I mean, I can't turn it into a French embassy, but it's *our* home... I thought that, maybe, also some of your things could—"

France finished putting the fries to dry up from the excess of oil and filled once again the frying pan before he turned towards his lover to kiss England hard on his lips.

"You should have just said the second I proposed," he reprimanded his half-husband kindly, smiling adoringly at him. "*Merci beaucoup, Angleterre~*"

"I-I'll go separate the kids before they turn once again the dining table into a mix of red, white, and blue. B- besides, I'm certain I have also seen some yellow and green, this time!" England announced, attempting to not show too much to France how much he liked the new prospective and France's gratitude for his proposition.

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France had just finished the last batch of French fries when the doorbell rang.

America rushed towards the door to open it as quickly as he could, while England got back to the kitchen to help France bringing the food to the dining room. At the same time, Canada and Seychelles just pretended to be busy to check on their brother without being too noticeable.

“Japan!! You really came!!” America yelled aloud, throwing himself at the smaller nation, almost making him fall backwards.

“Why would I not come, if I told you yes?” Japan asked quietly, earning only a sad glare from his boyfriend that told him everything he needed to know. “Ok. I know. Never mind,” he admitted eventually.

America, glad that he had morally won the debate, took Japan by his wrist and led him inside.

“Japan is here!!” America announced, in case it hadn’t been already too obvious.

Japan’s eyes fell immediately on Seychelles, not exactly knowing how to explain the presence of the young girl among America's family. Despite his surprise, however, he kindly greeted both her and Canada, bowing at them and earning kind smiles and warm handshakes from both.

“Welcome to our home, Japan!” England greeted Japan too, exiting the kitchen followed by France.

“*Bonjour*, Japan,” France offered, as they arranged the plates of food on the table. “You came perfectly on time. Sorry for the last-minute invite!”

“Thanks to you for having me” Japan answered kindly, bowing deeply to the two nations.

“I’m the one sorry about bothering you with so little warning...”

“We were the ones telling America that it was ok, so it's not a bother at all!” France answered in kind, turning back to the kitchen to get the last plates he had prepared.

“Yes, but it's your wedding lunch, isn't it?” Japan asked subdued, earning England's questioning stare on him.

“So, America told you everything, didn’t he? We weren't really sure about how much you knew, to be honest...”

“To be completely honest to you, it actually was Italy who told me,” Japan admitted, looking everywhere except than at England.

England's eyed turned large in shock and at the same time a loud crash was heard from the kitchen.

“France!” England called, rushing to the kitchen along with all the other nations.

They found France staring at the shards of a broken ceramic tray, his face a mask of panic.

“I-I'm sorry, it fell!” France explained in a shaken voice.



“So, you didn't know that Italy knew?” Japan realised, biting his lower lip in guilt. “I'm really sorry, France-san—”

“It's not like it's your fault,” England pointed out, starting to pick up the shards together with Canada.

America just sighed and held Japan from behind.

“I was supposed to tell you, really,” America explained to his parents. “It came out while talking with Italy and Germany in Rome. It's not like someone told him, he said that it was just hard to miss. *Everything* was hard to miss!”

“Are you trying to say that most of my family knows about us?” France asked America, staring back at him in complete shock.

“Well, Italy has never even checked with Romano-san or the others to see if they shared the same opinion, he just said it was obvious to him from the start...” Japan hastened to explain. “It's just Italy who knows for certain at the moment, I don't think you should consider it a problem...”

At Japan's reassuring words, France let himself fall against the kitchen counter and sighed loudly.

“It's not that,” he attempted to explain, “I'm not bothered by Italy knowing, but that we have tried to hide it all this time, when we could have just gotten out in the open and nothing weird would have happened...”

“I'm still not sure about that,” England countered, throwing away the remains of the broken tray before reaching his half-husband. “The fact that I'm ready to take the risk doesn't mean that I don't still consider coming out potentially dangerous.”

“Dangerous?” Japan asked surprised, whilst France just lowered his head in plain resignation.

“They could try to get me to have him,” France explained, taking the caring hand England had placed on his shoulder in his. “We've already seen it during the WWII, our Strait of Calais is too narrow not to interest whomever wants to get a hold of Great Britain.”

“We can't change this, though, can we?” Seychelles asked eventually, staring worriedly at her parents. “It's your wedding, don't ruin it thinking about what ifs!”

America's eyes shone hearing his sister and he left Japan's side to hug both his parents.

“Seychelles is right! Let's go party!” he exclaimed as he attempted to drag them back to the dining room. “Won't mom get angry if his food gets ruined?”

France chuckled and allowed America and England to accompany him in the dining room with the rest of the food. The only one left unsure of the conclusion of the debate was Japan, who still couldn't understand why was America talking about a mother.

Despite the rough beginning, after that the lunch proceeded smoothly, allowing both spouses to properly relax after the rough period they had put themselves through.

A moment of general hilarity happened when France took out a two layers *mille-feuille* that had a hand-painted England's Union Jack on the top and France's tricolour on the sides, rigorously vertical. America had rejoiced seeing the so colourfully decorated cake, while Canada and England thought that it was a bit too excessive –by France's standards– and voiced their protests to the baker.

It took Seychelles' comment that the main point was that it was good and they could count on France on it being delicious, however, to make Japan actually ask if everything had been really cooked and baked by the French nation.

At France's flirty positive answer, Japan almost had a heart attack, more at the implication that such a revelation would mean for him than because he didn't know France was one hell of a master in cuisine.

He had never thought that his cooking would be a problem with America, since both the boyfriend and his father-like figure were taste blind; he'd felt more worried when Italy had revealed to him that the father-like figure was America's actual father, but the fact that *France* was his father, however, hadn't fully registered for him until then.

America certainly wouldn't mind if he didn't live up to his French father cuisine, but Italy's tales about his culinary feuds with his cousin still haunted him at night.

Moreover, he still clearly remembered when one day Germany had invited France to his home to get friendly with the former Axis and the discussion between the two Romance nations had graciously degenerated into a culinary contest; Germany and Japan had been asked –aka obligated– to pick a recipe more or less common between the two related nations. Despite being supposed to follow the recipe word by word, both nations had managed to follow it in their own way. The results were two delicious cakes, identical enough to be considered more or less the same thing, but also completely different. How they had done it, it was anyone's guess... and when asked about their opinions, both Germany and Japan had feigned death.

Now he couldn't, though, especially if France decided to judge how suitable he was for his son by the way he cooked.

“Don't you like the cake?” France asked eventually, noticing Japan staring at nothing in front of himself, with a thin river of blood falling down one of his nostrils. “We teased you too much? It's just quite obvious for us that I'm the one cooking–”

France's last words made Japan focus forcefully back on the situation at hand, and he quickly took his fork to start on his piece of cake.

“O- of course not! It's delicious!” Japan hastened to say, hoping that someone could save him when the dreaded time would come. Maybe even the invite to lunch was supposed to be a trap, binding Japan to the obligation to return the favour and therefore putting him in the condition of being criticized.

It must be true, since as far as he knew France and England being gentle –especially to one another– usually meant hardships to whoever was present at the moment; hardships and comments about the host cooking, considering China’s intense tales about his experience under his employ.

The one who saved Japan from his cyclic collapse towards the epicentre of his dread was eventually England.

“Japan,” the English nation told him seriously, taking his hand in his and waiting for the other island nation to meet his eyes before continuing, “France married *me*. Don't worry, your cuisine is just fine. You only have to remember not to compete with him *ever* in your life.”

Japan’s eyes grew larger in surprise. “How did you–”

“I know the effect that France has on people: he enamours them and he scares them, usually at the same time. So don't worry!”

“Oi, what does that mean?!” France countered, glaring at his half-husband.

“That I'm glad I can't cook, sometimes...”

France pouted at England and took another bite of his cake, leaving the fork hanging from his mouth for more time that it was needed.

England chuckled at his displeasure and took the fork out France's mouth to steal a light kiss on his lips. Almost immediately, he heard the sound of a photo being taken.

“Sorry!” Japan offered submissively, putting away his camera. “Professional deformation–”

“I would call it character flaw,” Canada pointed out discretely, hiding his smirk behind his napkin.

“Japan!” France yelled instead, making the Asian nation jump in panic. “I want a copy of that photo!”

“F- France?” England asked, blushing a deep shade of red, while America stood up to glare reproachfully at his French father.

“Mom!!” He yelled outraged. “Why would you want it?”

“Why wouldn't I?” France asked quietly, taking America by surprise.

Japan just blinked first at America and then at France, his mind impossibly trying to deal with the idea that France was considered the *mother* of the family. This worried him even more.

“I'll make you a copy as soon as I get to develop the film,” Japan ended up answering, earning a nice score with France, who sat back down grinning happily to his achievement.

“I thought you would use polaroid, you know, Japan?” England took his chance to point out.

"I usually do, but it was quite a bother since it's so big," Japan confessed, taking a moment to check the condition of his camera and how many photos he had still left.

"America?" England called his son to the side so that he could whisper directly into his ear. "Buy Japan a bigger satchel for his polaroid!"

"Why would I?" America asked confused, trying to keep a low volume.

"To save me from your mother—"

"Dad, this family is becoming quite dull..." America complained, rising a discomfited eyebrow to his father.

"Give me a break, America. I just willingly married a Frenchman!"

"You also screwed him for the better part of the current millennium—"

"We can still hear you!" Canada cut into their discussion, heaving a deep resigned sigh at the level and topic of the debate.

"We can go together to develop our films!" Seychelles took her chance to propose to Japan in a higher tone of voice, hoping to kill America and England's unproductive argument. "I have plenty of photos from the wedding!"

"You know, with the proper equipment I could do that myself," Japan offered nicely. "It's not that difficult..."

"My dark room should still be usable," England remembered pensively.

"How didn't I know you had a dark room?" France teased with leer, earning England's scoff for it.

"It's nothing pornographic, you bloody idiot! We were talking about photography!!" England explained irritably. "Thomas Wedgwood is considered the first photographer worldwide, you know? And he was *English*!"

"That's the reason why the first men to kick out the stop motion from the main stream film-making were my Lumière brothers~" France countered haughtily.

"What the hell! Without my technology you would have done nothing!"

"This just proves that we are, as always, better than you at using your own things!"

From there on, England and France just kept arguing on technological and historical development brought by their respective countries for the better part of the following hour.

While they fought, Canada started making coffee –and tea for Seychelles– while America just checked regularly on his shocked boyfriend to be certain that he was still alive; as soon as coffee and tea were ready, however, both nations interrupted their quarrel and resumed a more familiar behaviour.

It was only when Japan was once again alone with America, while they were developing his and Seychelles photos in the dark room, that the Asian nation decided to point out the awkwardness of it all to his boyfriend.

"I can't believe that they really are *always* like that. I thought that it was just a cover up..."

"They are actually like this since we met them," America explained plainly, as he took the photo Japan had just pulled out the liquid to hang it to dry. "And also since they met one another's, as far as we know."

"You know, at the beginning of this century, England managed to convince me to face Russia..." Japan told America, before heaving a sigh. "In the end, however, his help on the matter was undeniably focused on bothering France, who was Russia's favourite ally at the time. Moreover, right in the middle of that, they ended up signing that *Entente Cordiale*—"

"If you are telling me this hoping to get some explanations, I'm of no use to you, sorry," America admitted, betraying a tiny bit of sadness at not being helpful at all. "We three can barely understand them ourselves, especially when they take political resolutions."

"Is it normal from them to move from war to an alliance without any apparent reason, you mean?"

"It's normal that they are hard to figure out," America explained better. "Canada thinks that their feelings are too polarised or something like that... you should talk about this with my siblings, actually. Sometimes they even manage to understand a bit of what our parents do!"

"Hmm..." Japan mumbled, honestly still unsure about the situation of America's family. As he stared properly at the image appearing on the photo he was currently developing, however, something else caught his attention. "America? How are you related to Seychelles?"

"Seychelles? My parents adopted her about a century ago... Why?"

"*Why* did they?" Japan asked instead.

"She adored mom while she was his dominion, but eventually dad conquered her. We had a bit of a family problem, back at the time, so they decided to include her in the family. After all, she is not much different from Canada, historically wise," America explained. "What's with Seychelles, though?"

"I was wondering if she was related to the fair haired woman in her photos," Japan admitted.

"Wait, there's no blond woman in her photos?" America countered surprised as he moved behind Japan. "Show me where?"

"This one," Japan pointed at the photo in front of himself.

"You know, Japan, I have understanding problems, but you are no better than me." America concluded after some time.

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"*That's France*"

"WHAT!?" Japan screamed at the top of his lungs.

"How cute, you can yell too!" America noted, smiling happily at his boyfriend's quite evident distress. "I thought you had voice volume problems like Canada, haha!"

Japan *really* wanted to point out that he and Canada were fine and that it was just America who was too loud, but his current predicament was more important than that.

"How can *this* be France, America-san?"

"Dad is dressed ancient too!" America pointed out, indicating with his index finger another photo already drying. "You see? It's because they did it like dad wanted... Straight from the middle ages and even earlier than that!"

"It seems strange that France went along with it..." Japan took his chance to point out, rising a dubious eyebrow to his boyfriend. "France certainly likes old things, but more the ones from the seventeenth or eighteenth century... right?"

"That's why they yelled seven years at one another to reach any kind of conclusion, and why this was just *half* of the wedding!"

"You actually mentioned this before," Japan agreed, though doubtful. "What will they do?"

"I have no idea," America admitted, "and even if it is France's part of the wedding, it still is England the one who is planning it..."

"Well, you get to party more than just once, you should love this," Japan teased America, a knowing grin plastered on his lips.

"I certainly liked today and I most likely will like the second part too," America admitted, sounding quite more discomforted than Japan would have expected. "I do wonder about the rest of the program however..."

"The rest of the program?"

"They are feeling like an old couple, so they are brushing dust away from what they did as kids," America explained with a loud sigh, mechanically helping Japan with yet another set of photos.

"Like today's ceremony you mean?"

"Yeah... The point is that they want to also redo Beltane...."

"Beltane?" Japan asked surprised, not understanding what could mean to the current French and English nations such an ancient tradition. "Isn't it a Celtic ritual of some sort? It was something like a good luck ceremony for a good harvest, wasn't it?"

“Don't ask me, I might be their son but I share nothing of this with them,” America admitted candidly, safe in the knowledge that Japan knew quite well that he wasn't good at these kind of things. “Besides, France completely forgotten that part of his heritage... I think it wasn't even ever applied in the current French territory.”

“Then, what worries you?”

“I love my brother and sister, don't get me wrong, but I'm quite sure we'll get another one after this Beltane...”

“I don't follow?” Japan told him plainly, hoping that America would finally get to the point and explain where the problem laid.

“England's very first attempt to date mom was asking him to join Beltane with him. Canada and I were born because of it,” America explained, “dad *can* honestly use magic, and back then was way easier for nations to have children in some random way or another...”

“Even if this is what happened back then... why are you so sure that it will happen again?”

“Would you trust them not to get drunk and have sex during the apex of a lifecycle changing ceremony?”

Heard his boyfriend's blunt explanation, Japan just turned to America and laid his caring hands on his shoulders.

“Be strong, America-san!” Japan reassured him, hoping to give him enough courage to fight the hardships that laid in his near future. “I'll help you find a suitable gift for your new sibling, don't worry!”

Somehow, the fact that Japan had also given up as soon as he had pointed out the obvious, made America realise how much he was doomed.

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**T.B.C.**

## The pains of a proper nation

Eventually the morning of the second of May came, as always bringing awareness and pixies screaming in England's ears.

Modernity had modified some parts of the ritual and had made alcohol accessible from the very beginning, so the promise England had extorted from France not to distil anything had been quite useless.

This time he didn't have to search anywhere for answers, since along with the head-splitting headache he also felt his hips and lower back painfully abused. That was a bit strange, honestly, since France had always been a very kind and attentive top. England was usually the violent one that left his lover bruised and pained... Luckily, he also left him deeply satisfied.

England groaned in pain, and attempted to drag himself off his half-husband, apparently still deeply asleep under him. As he felt England moving, however, France opened a questioning eye and held him closer to keep him in place.

"Where are you going, *mon amour*?" France asked, his voice hoarse with sleep.

"We need to dress, love, people will start waking up soon," England protested, despite obediently stopping his attempts to move off his half-husband. "Besides, I am absolutely certain that we'll have another child to find after this..."

"Oh, well, *quand le vin est tiré il faut le boire, mon cher*," France leered, tightening his grip on England to roll them so that his half-husband laid on his back under him. "We are already naked and you feel still quite ready from yesterday night!"

"*In for a penny in for a pound* my ass!!" England yelled desperately, attempting to get free. "I give my children enough parental issues as it is!"

"Now, *mon amour*, at least you are accepting your bad parenting, you might be healing!" France offered, as he started licking and kissing hungrily his half-husband's neck.

England shivered in pleasure at the teasing and his grip on France became weaker. The French nation then moved his hands to give full attention to England's torso still slick with sweat, molesting his well-defined abs and belly button before trailing down England's sides. Meanwhile, France's lips stopped tormenting his neck and moved lower to nibble playfully his hardening nipples.

"F-France..." England moaned, as his fingers found their way into France's long wavy hair despite his better judgement.

It was only when one of France's hands moved to cup directly his butt cheeks to press their groin together that England came back to himself, and attempted to seriously move France away from him.



"France, fuck it! I told you I don't want to risk it, and we forgot to bring any condom—"

France looked back at England a bit puzzled.

"Why are you so certain that this will bring us another child? The ritual is different, I am different. And this time you, who have the most affinity with all this, are bottoming..."

"It still is Beltane, France, and we already discovered that even if it's the morning after we are still bound by the ritual!"

"I think that you are worrying too much," France countered, still attempting to seduce England back into the mood with small pecks running from his temple down to his cheek, neck and then chest.

England squirmed under the gentle attack and moaned in frustration. When France's lips had reached once again his nipple and his hands his butt cheeks, however, he gathered all his will to fight him off.

"F- France! I said stop it, dammit!!" England yelled, kicking his half-husband away kicking him on his stern.

France fell on his back because of the hard shove and groaned in pain.

"Why you are always no fun at all, England?" France complained, massaging his pained chest as he sat up to glare at his lover.

"I told you to stop, idiot," England complained, attempting to stand up only to discover that his legs weren't quite ready to sustain him. Before he fell, however, France had already jumped back on his feet to reach for him.

*"Angleterre, mon amour, comment te sens-tu?"*

"I'm fine," England answered quietly, grasping France's arms for dear life. "You were just harsher than usual, but I'm alright."

"You should have told me before I began teasing you, you idiot!" France offered, his voice full of worry. "I would have never proposed a second round, if I had known this..."

"France, a bit of discomfort is fine with me," England countered, allowing France to help him get dressed, "but I'm really getting crazy with Canada and Seychelles at the moment. The last thing I need is another child that will soon tell me they want independence..."

"Canada is alright with staying in the Commonwealth, *Angleterre*, you shouldn't worry this much. Same goes for Seychelles!"

"I keep worrying, though. The Commonwealth would be the only thing left to me of my Empire and of a part of my family..."

"Maybe De Gaulle was right voting against you for the EEC..."

"I wonder about it myself, sometimes," England admitted with a sigh, as he finally finished buttoning up his shirt and leaned against the tree trunk to wait for France to get dressed too. "I will still try to join again, later on."

"Then I hope I can side with you when you will do it, *mon amour*," France offered to him openly. "No matter what will happen, I'll try make my sovereigns see reason."

"Thank you, France. I hope that I can side with you some other times too," England offered back, "even though you are a bloody war-aholic..."

France chuckled at England's words before leaning over to kiss him lightly on his cheek.

"Like you are any different!"

England smirked back at France, acknowledging his reading of the situation. "Let's go now, who knows where the new addition to our family will pop out!"

France chuckled at England and made him climb on his back, so that he could carry him back home.

"You know, *mon cher*? Something tells me that we'll find them closer than we imagine..."

---

"France? I found him!" England announced to his family the second of September 1967.

They were meeting before a world assembly in Berlin that Germany and America had organised to convince France to stop being his usual asshole self and fucking re-join the NATO Mediterranean fleet.

France had been chatting with his sons, wondering where the hell his half-husband had hidden himself, when the island nation had appeared behind him.

"England? What are you talking about?" France asked confused, while at the same time America and Canada spotted a blond child trotting after England and rushed to meet their new brother.

"I knew we were about to have a little brother!!" America yelled happily hugging Sealand tightly, compelling Canada to attempt to quieten him down in order to *still* have a younger sibling at the end of America's welcome hug.

France, on his end, stared dubiously at the hyperactive Sealand interacting with the hyperactive America, attempting not to notice the similarities. Even more difficult to ignore was the way he apparently had no problems guessing Canada's French from the seemingly loose knowledge he had of Latin.

“*Angleterre, mon amour*, how did you managed to find him?” France attempted to investigate, rising a suspicious eyebrow at his evidently tired half-husband.

“He is a micronation between France and England,” England declared. “The reason why I had constructed the base that has become Sealand was to get to you during the WWII. On one hand, he speaks English and he is in my own territorial waters, on the other hand...”

England stopped talking to allow France to listen carefully to Sealand singing to his brothers how his national anthem was called.

“...*E mare libertas!*” Sealand was declaiming, amongst his brothers' cheers.

“All this liberty bullshit can only be your fault.” England stated and France certainly had to admit that his half-husband had a point.

“Well, at least being a micronation you won't have to fear him becoming strong and independent like America?” France offered, holding his half-husband from behind as they both stared at their children getting to know one another.

England leaned against France's chest, getting fully comfortable in his embrace, and smirked evilly at the scene in front of them.

“He won't, don't worry... And you will help me with this,” England ordered quietly, making France turning a bit to stare worried at the nation still enclosed in his arms.

“*Angleterre?*”

“You will have to promise me to never recognise him as a nation, love of my life.”

“Why every time you use terms of endearment you mock me or attempt to make me doing something horrible?” France protested, attempting to talk in a low voice, so that the kids would not hear them. “If the kid is our son, he *must* be a nation!”

“He can be a nation without any single official recognition,” England explained, his smirk getting eviller by the minute. “I need you by my side for that, however. I need you and all the nation you can influence, America and Canada along with them.”

“England, I won't put my kids one against the other!” France protested heatedly. “I'm not you.”

“You owe me one, you retired from the NATO.”

“I didn't! I retired from the Mediterranean fleet!”

“You voted against me to the EEC.”

“This again?? You refused to marry me!”

“I half-married you, however, and I'm working for the remaining half,” England pointed out matter-of-factly.

“England, I don't *want* to!”

“France?”

“What?” France asked harshly, utterly exasperated by his half-husband’s attempts to make him his accomplice in mischief.

“I didn't wear pants today,” England stated plainly, allowing a long minute of silence to start as the information was elaborated by France’s mind.

“Are you trying to seduce me?” The French nation asked eventually.

“Is it working?” England asked back, smirking to his half-husband, the light movements of France's groin against his butt being quite the demonstration that he had finally found the right way to bend France to his will.

“Fuck it, *Angleterre*, I do want you,” France admitted his defeat with a hoarse groan.

“You can have me during the break, if you are a good boy,” England offered haughtily, caressing France's beard with the tip of his index finger. “Now go say hello to our new kid. The meeting will start any minutes now and you are the main course.”

“Won't his mother introduce me to him?” France teased, earning England's smart smirk for it.

“Oh, I already told him everything he needed to know,” He offered in a tone that scared France deep to his bones. “Sealand, won't you come saying hello to your mother?”

“Wait? What!?” France countered flabbergasted, moving to stand in front of England to glare at him properly. “*You* bottomed the last Beltane!!”

“You already are the mum of the family, we shouldn't confuse the kids,” England offered, smirking even more maliciously as he stared at Sealand actually coming to hug tightly France by his waist, despite the French nation’s discomfort.

“Finally! I’m so glad to have a whole family!” Sealand cheered, brushing his plump cheek affectionately against France’s belly.

“Hi, darling?” France offered awkwardly, his hand automatically going to caress the top of Sealand’s head. “I hope we'll have more time to know each other at lunch!”

“Why not right away?” Sealand asked, pouting sadly as he stared up at France.

“Well, soon the meeting with the other nations will begin, and your mum is quite the centre of the attention at the moment,” France explained kindly, deciding to give up strangling England for having conned him since the sixteenth century for the sake of his kids.

“Can I come too, please?” Sealand requested politely, his eyes literally shining with hope.

“Can I be a proper nation like you all? It seems fun being a proper nation!!”

France swallowed, damning himself for the child's obvious request, whilst Canada and America just plainly laughed at their new brother. Sealand stared questioningly back at his family, not really understanding what problem laid in his request.

"Sealand, you are asking for freedom to the wrong parent," America explained bluntly. "France isn't usually the one against it, at least not when *we* are involved."

"Sealand is too small and young to be recognised as a proper nation, however, " France forced himself to say, staring at everything that wasn't his sons. "I don't think it's proper for him being a nation right now."

Both Canada and America stared surprised back at France, before turning to glare at England, who was admiring the scene with the evillest glare they could imagine.

"Dad, what is this supposed to mean?" Canada asked quietly, crossing his arms on his chest in silent reproach.

"C'mon, kids, your father is right!" France attempted to justify his half-husband, despite allowing a deep sigh to leave his lips together with the heartfelt request. "He is right between us, we can keep an eye on him better than we could ever do with you guys."

"Mum, he's not one of your colonies, he's just a fort in the sea!" Canada countered, turning his glare against his French father. "Why can't you guys just leave him have his life?"

"Because it's unsafe, Canada, for both him and us," England explained coldly. "I won't have again a fully-fledged nation between me and your mother, and I won't have such a small point on the map wandering unsupervised amongst proper nations that could easily crush him, both economically and politically."

Canada, America and France all lowered their head, acknowledging the truth behind England's words. Despite not having understood the better part of England's speech, Sealand could only pout in displeasure at the resigned expression of the rest of his family.

"But I want to be a proper nation..." he wailed quietly. "I want to be a free and independent country!"

"Of course you do," England stated plainly, looking angrily at France, who winced in guilt. "It's genetic."

"Still, you are never going to get it," he concluded, turning once again towards Sealand. "Now, be a good child and wait here until the next break. Seychelles is getting here to keep you company, so you won't be left alone while we're yelling at France and you will also meet your sister."

Sealand pouted miserably at England's orders and nodded, going to sit obediently on a chain despite the gloomy aura surrounding him. Canada, America and France felt their heart break at the sight, but didn't even attempt to protest.

"I'll ring my sister too. Maybe as a fellow micronation they can find some common ground," France offered, in a vain attempt to quell his guilty feeling.

"Mum, Monaco is independent!" Canada pointed out harshly. "Still, you're right. It might be a good idea..."

"Be right back," France announced, leaving to get to the nearest telephone.

"It's so unfair, though!" America wailed as soon as his French father had disappeared behind the corner. "Everyone should be free, can't the hero do something??"

"Recognise me as a nation?" Sealand asked hopefully, his big blue eyes getting even larger.

America felt completely uneasy seeing his hope, but despite how tempting it was he honestly couldn't find it in himself to not agree with his fathers. Eventually, he lowered his head in defeat.

"Nothing good ever came out of me going against *both* of them. I'm sorry, little brother," America admitted, crushing unwillingly Sealand's hopes.

"England, America, the meeting is about to begin!" Germany called out as he approached the quarrelling family. "Where's France?"

"He's gone off calling Monaco, he will be back in a matter of minutes," England offered him.

"Who is he?" Germany asked as he had finally reached them, noticing Sealand sitting gloomily on a chair.

"He is the latest addition to our family," England explained, unable to hide his pride despite attempting to sound severe. "Say hi to Germany, Sealand!"

Sealand looked up to Germany, his blue sad eyes watering in a plain attempt to move the older nation to pity.

"Hi, Mr. Germany. Would you mind recognising me as a nation?"

His words left the rest of his family shocked in surprise, so no one of them had enough time to stop Germany answering promptly to Sealand.

"Of course! No problem for me!" Germany established with fierce determination.

"Everything for the son of England and France!"

Germany understood that something was wrong with the whole situation when he noticed Sealand jumping in pure joy and perceived a dark aura appearing behind him. As he turned, he noticed that the dark aura was no one else than an angry England.

"You will have to do something for me now, Germany," England threatened the German nation, who could only swallow and nod in front of the British Empire. "I want you to prevent anyone else from recognising Sealand as a nation, did I make myself clear?"

"E-England, you are quite scary, you know?" Germany attempted to point out to his friend, hoping he could somehow revert to his normal self without swearing to become his accomplice in such a nasty project.

"You still owe me for the WWII, and now you just did something unforgivable!" England explained him maliciously.

"I- I thought that making him happy was what you wanted?" Germany tried once again. "I'm sorry, England."

"There are three things that you will always have to consult me about before even *thinking* to approve something they want: my empire, my husband and my kids." The island nation explained coldly. "Keep this in mind whenever you decide to use your own brain."

"Wait, do you mean that I should talk with you beforehand *also* each time I have to sign a treaty with *France*?"

"Did you have any doubts about it?"

"I just thought—"

"You'd better stop thinking by yourself and just obey to the British Empire," England threatened, the dark violet aura of hate behind him flaming even more violently than before.

Germany, frozen in panic, could just nod and swear that he would abide the request. Behind Germany, also America and Canada were hugging one another trembling in fear at the sight of their English father so angered. Only Sealand, unaware of what an irate England could mean, still jumped in joy at having his first proper recognition.

Germany, America and Canada felt even more scared when England's expression suddenly changed to one of pure love and kindness, as he went patting caringly Sealand on his head.

"Now now, Sealand, you shouldn't trick older nation like that," he said, smiling widely to his son. "Be a good boy from now on, will you?"

Germany, America and Canada, witnessing to the abrupt change in England's behaviour, began wailing and crying in fear, even more so when Sealand just excused himself politely, thus earning a satisfied hug by his father.

"*Angleterre*, stop scaring Germany and the kids!" France reprimanded his half-husband as he finally went back to his family, sided by both Seychelles and Monaco.

"*Mon Dieu*," the blond female micronation just commented, seeing the scene in front of her. "I still can't believe Big Brother really hooked up with such a barbaric nation—"

"Hi to you too, Monaco," England offered, his tone of voice plain and void of emotion as he turned towards the newcomers and walked towards them, bringing Sealand with him by hand. "France, you took your time... the meeting is about to begin!"

France nodded to his half-husband and then put one hand over Monaco's head and the other over Seychelles'.

"We are leaving everything in your hands, *mes chéries*. Be two good girls, alright?" He told them kindly as he ruffled their hair, making both girls purr in delight.

England took his chance to kiss hello to his daughter too, before leaving Sealand with the two girls and literally dragging France along with him towards Germany and their two oldest sons.

"C'mon France, prepare yourself to be screamed at!" England announced before they eventually all disappeared into the conference room.

---

France went through the first part of the meeting relatively unscathed, despite his growing headache. Not even England and America had been kind to him, making France decide to keep his point just on a matter of principle.

It wasn't just that, obviously. De Gaulle had actually made some interesting points in opposition to the Cold War against Russia, still he personally was a bit more open than his sovereigns on the matter. Mostly, because his whole family seemed to be really taken with it.

When the desired coffee break came, England took his half-husband to the study momentarily assigned to him for the set of conferences they had planned those days, in order to speak with France privately.

"*Angleterre*, shouldn't we join our kids at the cafeteria? I still barely spoke to Sealand at all!" France protested as England closed the door of the study behind them.

"I thought you wanted to play with me a bit?" England teased him instead, dragging France towards the empty desk by the lapels of his jacket. As he cornered himself against the hard surface, he allowed his lips to just barely tease France's. "Changed your mind?"

"You yelled at me until half an hour ago!" France protested annoyed, despite taking a firm grip of England's butt before rising him to sit properly on the desk, his legs at the sides of France's waist. "And now you are seducing me?"

"I don't like screaming at you... and I need to know that you still love me despite *that*," England admitted as he took France's tie in his hands to start playing with it, slowly dragging his half-husband towards him. "Do you love me, France?"

France groaned at England's uncertain words and moved his hips forward so that his groin could brush against England's. Then, he buried his face against his lover's neck and began kissing the soft skin there, enjoying the feeling of it as much as the enticing smell that was all England.



"I more than just love you," France growled, pressing desperately against England and, in doing so, making him tremble beneath him. "I need you more than I need air."

France's hands roamed freely on England's sides and then over his back, caressing and feeling up the strong muscles through the light fabric of his shirt and waist-coat.

"I don't have enough time to taste you properly, though," France complained with a deep sigh, earning only a chuckle from England, who took his chance to put his arms around France's neck to bring him closer.

"That can wait until tonight," the island nation whispered lightly in his ear, enjoying the way France was touching him like he was one of the instruments musicians played in his shows.

When the French nation moved his hands downward to open England's trousers, though, England quickly stopped his half-husband's movements with a firm slap of his hand.

"Allow me," France insisted, however. He moved England's hand to hold himself more steadily on the desk and pushed down his trousers just enough to let England's already half-hard cock spring free.

England had no chance to try once again to stop his lover since France suddenly swallowed him whole, erasing with a single gesture any reason he had to still attempt stopping France.

More than anything else, France focused on working his tongue at the base of England's length and sucking hard on the tip, just to give England that rushed head start he loved.

Centuries had passed since their very first time and the things they had been willing to try in bed – or in all the other places they had at their disposal, just to say that out loud – had gradually changed along with them and the passage of all the different historical periods. Still, there was something that England had always needed, and was to be swept away abruptly from a reality that quite often bound him to difficult choices and wars.

France had gradually understood that a quick and rushed start would quite often do the trick, especially whenever they were lacking time.

When there was no time limit, France liked to drag England away from his worries gradually, loving the feeling of the British Empire's pride slowly crumbling under his fingers, but when they were in situations like the current one being sudden and abrupt was a necessity for the both of them. Especially when the one who desperately needed to feel their connection was England.

It wasn't obviously that France didn't feel the same pressure on himself, but he had gotten used to it and, as soon as he could enjoy some time alone with his lover, he was ready to leave everything behind.

Only when France felt England finally letting himself go to the pleasure he was feeling, did he begin bobbing his head in time with the strokes of his hand, as his tongue licked his lover's whole length and teased his balls.

It didn't take much to England to regain his wits, though, and soon his fingers found their way into France's soft tresses, tugging it upwards in order to have his half-husband's attention on him.

France at first ignored him but, when the tugging became more desperate as England started to actually lose control of himself, he eventually allowed his lover to pull him away from his crotch. It was automatic going for a kiss then, their lips meeting naturally halfway as they had prearranged everything.

Tongues met and entwined, savouring the feeling they gave to one another as much as the hotness of their breath and the wetness of France's lips. As France deepened the kiss to claim his half-husband mouth and explore with leisure his hot cavern, he took his chance to also grind his hips against England's groin.

The feeling of France's cotton covered hardness against his naked and sensitive one made England moan in desperation, allowing him to finally find enough strength to ask his lover to move on.

"France, come to the other side," He whispered to his lips, sprawled on the table, as he pointed his elbows on the desk to move himself further up so that his head could rest right over the edge.

So aroused he was, it took France some seconds to understand what England's intention was, but as soon as it clicked he allowed himself to smirk at his lover's idea and to thank him with a chaste kiss on his lips. After all, there weren't many other options.

France moved to the other side of the desk, then, and opened his own trousers, pushing them down along with his pants enough so that England could take him in his mouth with ease.

England didn't waste any time and started to tease and lick France's balls and the underside of his cock, helping himself with his hands wherever he couldn't reach with his tongue.

A soft moan escaped France's lips, as he found himself in need to move his weight to the hands pinned on the desk to not risk falling miserably. As it was, France's mouth was high enough to be out of England's reach, but close enough to tease him with the hot breath that left him together with his whimpers and moans.

The frustration only made England feeling his excitement even more, making him decide to up the ante, slightly turning France putty in his hands. When England was certain that France was close enough, he decided it was time to actually go for the finish.

"France, please," England asked him, hoping to drag France out of his trance, his voice dripping with need as he finally took the whole of France's length in his mouth, almost deep-throating him with a single drive.

France closed his eyes shut at the sensation and choked back a moan, before taking a deep breath and finally lowering his head to England's groin. He let his tongue dart out to tease the still twitching head and lick it clean it from the small droplets of pre-cum there, only then he

finally took him into his mouth in earnest, bobbing his head to the rhythm he knew England liked.

England groaned at the feeling and the vibrations made France's cock twitch in his mouth. As it was, England's movements were slightly hindered by the position, so what he could do was mostly some tongue work and sucking. That was enough, however, to slowly drive France crazy, so much that stilling his hips was becoming increasingly difficult.

Sensing his lover's distress, England let his hand run up his thigh to pat him lightly on his hip, in a silent signal to give up any restrictions, and relaxed his throat in anticipation. France, understanding the signal, freed England's cock from his mouth almost completely and started fucking his half-husband's mouth in earnest, timing it in short intermittent series of thrusts to allow England the time he needed to breathe.

Between the debouching feeling of having his mouth fucked and France's skilled blowjob, England felt soon like he was about to come. Before he was way too close, he patted once again France's hips, his movement more a tentative grasp than a firm slap this time.

"Hold on," France managed to tell him, as he released completely England's cock from his mouth and focused on thrusting deeper into his lover's ready throat. It took him only a couple more thrusts before he finally came down his throat. He then slipped out England to allow him to breathe deeply and spit out whatever he hadn't manage to swallow.

As England took his time to fill his lungs once again with some well needed air, France moved back to the other side of the desk and dragged him into a more comfortable position.

"Are you alright?" France asked, as he covered him with his body and caressed caringly England's cheek.

As soon as his half-husband nodded to him, France moved back his head between England's thighs and took England's cock once again wholly into his mouth. After a few preparatory bobs of his head, he deep-throated him fully, preparing himself to return the favour.

England coughed out a gasp of surprise at the feeling and grasped his hands tight in France's perfect hair.

"Fra-" He managed to call, before spurting his seed down his lover's throat.

Taking advantage of the more favourable position, France not only swallowed it all but also took his time to properly clean up England's still sensitive groin from any trace left of their encounter. Once he deemed his work done and England teased enough, he pulled up his lover's trousers, buttoning them up with care.

England, completely worn out, was still panting heavily from the encounter, so France bent once again over him to kiss him kindly on his cheek in a vain hope to reassure himself that his half-husband was still alive and well.

"Are you alright, *mon amour*?" France asked worriedly.

He received only a small nod in answer, before England actually managed to gather all his remaining strength and took a glance at his watch.

“Fuck it, we have only two minutes left” England noticed tiredly, letting his arms fall boneless on the desk with a loud bump.

“I must go, but you can sleep a few hours in the other study” France offered, stretching himself back up to assess the damages to his own outfit.

He took some tissues out of his pockets to clean up his groin a bit and then he put his pants and trousers back on properly; he didn't know which god to thank, but he had managed to avoid even the slightest stain. He probably had to thank England's practice, though.

As he took out his pocket mirror, however, the damage to his attire looked a bit more serious: his hair was in a complete disarray, his cheeks and lips reddened and his skin shining with sweat. Looking back at his lover, however, he had to admit that he was the least shabby of the two.

First things first, France took another handkerchief from his pockets and wet it under the water distributor inside the study, washing his face as best as he could; then, he took out from the hidden pockets of his jacket what he needed to wash his teeth and clean his mouth, spitting the mouthwash and water he had used to rinse his mouth into a spare plastic glass that he then emptied out of the window.

Eventually, France styled his hair back into some kind of order, keeping his appearance in check through his mirror. When he could finally deem himself presentable enough, France turned to watch his lover's progress and found him resting boneless on the desk, in the same position he had left him.

France could only sigh at the sight, and took out yet another handkerchief to wet it under the water distributor.

“My love?” France asked dubiously, as he went back to his half-husband, “are you still with me?”

England answered him with only a hoarse groan, making France decide to just try to clean England at least a little bit on his own.

He took care easily of his face and hands, then he attempted to give his hair some kind of order with his comb. He didn't put much effort to this last task, though, or it would have been too obvious that someone else had put their hands on those blond spikes.

“England? I must go back or they will come searching for us,” France eventually told him after a rapid check of his watch. “If you grant me the last of your energy I'll let you sleep in the study next door, this one stinks and we need to leave the window open.”

“I need to go back with you,” England groaned, earning France's annoyed scoff for it.

“Don't worry, it's America's turn to scream at me, you already did your job this morning. I'll find a suitable excuse for you,” France reassured him and basically dragged England down the desk before putting his arm around his neck, hoping that he could make him stand somehow.

England's legs didn't collaborate much, though, so eventually France decided to put both of England's arms around his neck and just carry him out the study bridal style. Luckily, he found no one in the corridor, so he could do everything with minimum hassle.

As he laid his half-husband on the study sofa, however, he allowed himself to sigh, disheartened, at the sight of his completely undone lover.

“Later today, you will have to explain me how did I managed to ruin you like this, you know *Angleterre*? You set the pace!” France reprimanded him plainly.

He was about to leave the room to go back to the other study, when a choked cry reached his ears.

“*Angleterre*?” France asked, his voice full of worry as he rushed back to his lover to caress his head kindly.

“Don't leave the NATO, France, please!” England pleaded, taking a strong grip of France's jacket to hide his face against his chest. “I want my foreign policy to be yours...”

“I'm not pulling out, *mon cœur*,” France reassured him, caressing lovingly the top of his head. “It's more a formality than anything else. You know that I can't follow your economic approach against Russia, he has been one of my strongest allies...”

“He let Germany get you during the WWII!” England wept quietly.

“After that he helped us defeating Germany, though.”

“Because Germany attacked him!”

“*Angleterre*.” France stopped him, placing a kind kiss on his forehead. “You won't get rid of me that easily. Instead of worrying about something that's not about to happen, use this time to think about my half of the marriage. I still want my exchange of rings and my papers signed!”

England chuckled at France's protests and let his caresses kindly lull him to sleep. Reassured about England's wellbeing by his soft snore, France's then rushed out of his study to clean up England's and then rushed back to the meeting, more or less five minutes late.

By the door, he met America and Canada, leaning against a side of the door each and staring disapprovingly at him.

“Sorry for being late,” France offered his sons with a goofy laugh, but it didn't seem enough for the two nations.

“Where's England?” Canada asked quietly.

“Sleeping.” France admitted sheepishly. “In the study they momentarily assigned to me.”

“Tell us a good reason why we shouldn't tell the others why you are late and he is not here!” America asked in his brother’s same cold voice.

“I was late because we talked about me leaving the NATO,” France countered plainly, safe in the knowledge that *that* was actually the reason why he had ended up being late. “And you know how England gets when he doesn't like what I do...”

Both brothers sighed deeply, perfectly imagining England's self-destructive practices.

“Hope you have a proper excuse ready,” Canada simply mentioned, sighing deeply as he moved from the door to allow France to enter.

America did the same and followed his father and brother back inside. France's torture could finally resume.

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**T.B.C.**

## Separations and Rendezvous

Three more years had to pass before England's nerves finally stopped shaking.

With the end of De Gaulle's politics in France, his request to join the EEC was finally accepted and was France basically back to the NATO, something that managed to make him feel a bit more in control of his half-husband's political decisions.

During those three years of panic, however, who had suffered most of the consequences was obviously his family; Sealand had been spoiled to no end, but any other nation in the world had been highly suggested not to recognize him as a nation. Eventually, the better part of them resorted to plainly pretend not to see him whenever the child nation ended up being too much of a bother.

France and Germany, in particular, had been more or less compelled to use their own influence to enforce England's will: France since he was the prime cause of England's distress and Germany since he had inadvertently already recognised Sealand.

Also Canada and Seychelles fell under England's bad temper: Canada having his independency requests continuously rejected and Seychelles being left alone to deal with an invasion of tourists and film stars.

America had made himself scarce with the excuse to attempt focusing on his own projects, and had overly used the freedom he had to frequently disappear to Japan's. Somehow, this made England feel even more nervous.

Luckily, after those first years had passed, as soon as their foreign policy settled and thanks to the basically steady cohabitation England and France had arranged for themselves, things had finally started to proceed smoothly.

Being together all the time felt like a surreal dream for the two nations who were finally able to behave like a proper couple and have enough time to enjoy their family, something they had longed for during all those years.

Still, the years kept passing by and England showed no signs of finishing up the marriage they had left abandoned halfway; most of the times France thought nothing of it, since they shared their homes, went to dates regularly and were surrounded by the love of their kids, but sometimes he really had to wonder what was taking England so long.

France had attempted to propose some agreements of his own whenever the right international occasion emerged, but each and every time England had just pleaded him to wait and trust him. He had always accepted his will... still, he couldn't stop himself from being afraid that his half-husband had changed his mind about the marriage, no matter how their relationship had lately turned into the worst secret ever kept in the whole world history.

That England was unwilling to change how things were, however, didn't necessarily mean that his whole family had to be on the same page.

It was 1976 when Seychelles finally decided to take courage with both hands and go share her thoughts with her parents; she waited for England to follow France back to French territory and then scooped up Monaco as soon as she arrived in Marseilles.

There was no chance that she could do this alone, and she had to get a hold of every little advantage she could get, no matter if none of her siblings eventually managed to be present.

"Mum, dad, I have to tell you something," Seychelles told her parents at the end of their family dinner, her smile so strained that she could fool none of them into thinking that hers would be good news for the older nations.

"If that's important, we should put on the kettle," France proposed cheerfully, hoping deep inside that some tea could ease the tension that had been building up among them since the beginning of their dinner. "*Angleterre, mon cher?*"

"Leave it to me," England agreed quietly, standing up from his chair to prepare tea for everyone.

Time to get everyone's orders and wait for the water to boil, and he was soon back with a small tray full of steaming teacups and a jug of milk. France added to the service some tea cookies and hoped that to be enough to sweeten up whatever news Seychelles had for them.

"I guess we're settled now," France offered eventually, attempting to break the silence that had fallen on them. He took his cup of tea and took a small sip, just to give the whole situation some sort of apparent normality. "*Ma chérie?*" He enquired eventually.

"W- well," Seychelles began, only to decide to take her own cup of tea first. She took a small sip from it and then stole a quick glance towards Monaco, who just stared at first back to Seychelles and then to her own brother.

France just sighed and turned to stare at England, somehow guessing what all that exchange of glances might be about.

"Go on, *ma chérie*," France offered quietly, staring eventually back to his daughter. "You don't have to fret. You know that we love you, *non?*"

"And I love *you!*" Seychelles acknowledged, sighing loudly as she put down her teacup in resigned defeat. "I really do, I never had a family before... I never even thought I wanted one before you came..."

"But?" England asked her eventually, beginning to understand he himself what Seychelles' speech might be about.

"But I would like to be independent." Seychelles admitted in the end, not daring to look England in the eyes. "It doesn't need to be like America's, I'm fine with remaining in the Commonwealth... But... I would really like it..."

Only deep silence met her words, making her eventually staring up at her English father. England, however, was just staring quietly at the cup of tea in his hands, his expression



betraying none of his thoughts.

"Dad?" Seychelles asked eventually, feeling sheer panic rising in her chest. "Please, say something..."

As the silence continued, Monaco stared back with pleading eyes at France, hoping to make him intercede for Seychelles somehow.

"Please, brother," she asked quietly, earning France's depressed sigh for it.

He put aside his own cup of tea and then took England's away from his hands, finding no resistance at all there. He placed it back on the tea table and put his arms around England's shoulders, bringing him close to him.

"*Angleterre*, she's waiting for an answer," he cooed gently, "she will believe that you hate her, if you don't say something."

France prepared himself to hear England's desperate cries at the news and to restrain him by sheer force, but instead he heard only his half-husband's resigned sigh.

"I knew that it would have happened sooner or later," England admitted in a small voice. "Still... it hurts."

France brought England even closer, hiding his lover's face against his chest as he lovingly caressed his hair.

"Shush, *mon cher*," He whispered, leaving a comforting kiss on the top of his head as his arms tightened around him. Only then England allowed himself some soft sniffles, unwillingly breaking his daughter's heart.

It was true that she liked France way more than England, but she really couldn't deny that he had always been a good father to her.

"Dad, please, I'm not leaving your house." Seychelles offered kindly, not expecting that kind of reaction from her English father. "I just want the freedom to make my own choices. *S'il vous plaît, papa.*"

"What will it be, *Angleterre*?" France asked him matter-of-factly, knowing quite well that England would just keep silent otherwise. "We already discussed this, you will have to kill her to stop this."

Seychelles and Monaco froze up hearing France's honest words, but felt soon relieved seeing England shaking his head in a silent answer.

"I can't, you know that..." England admitted, despite grasping France's shirt for dear life. "It still hurts."

"You still have the Commonwealth," France murmured as quietly as he could, taking his chance to kiss the tip of his ear. "And our family. Our family ties will never disappear, *mon cœur.*"

“She's not related to us by blood, though,” England pointed out sadly, pushing himself slightly away from France’s embrace but still not looking at none of the others in the eyes. “If the Commonwealth crumbles like my empire... I will have nothing left.”

“What about being family through marriage?” Monaco prompted with determination, earning all the rest of her family's eyes on her.

“*Sœur?*” France managed to ask eventually, as soon as he got over the shock of Monaco’s proposition.

Why did they seem to own the greatest ability not to understand what the hell happened in the romantic life of their children??

“If I married Seychelles, she will be definitively a part of this family, won't she?” Monaco explained in a clearer way, putting down her own cup of tea to sit up properly, her back regally straight as she put her well-manicured hands on her thighs and stared straight into France and England’s eyes. “Give your daughter to me, *frère. Beau-frère, s'il vous plait.*”

“Monaco?” Seychelles asked surprised and blushing scarlet at the unexpected proposal, earning Monaco's kind smile towards her.

“I will never leave you alone, *ma niece*,” She told Seychelles, taking her hands in hers. “This will be something only for the two of us, if you would like to do me the honour to accept. For our family. It will stay in place despite any political choice we might face... Would you like it, *ma chère* Seychelles?”

“Monaco!” Seychelles managed to say, her brown eyes watering. “What would I do without you?”

“With a bit of luck you will never have to worry about it, *ma chérie*,” Monaco told her kindly, caressing her jaw lightly before kissing her chastely on her lips.

The two girls just stared a few meaningful moments at one another's eyes before Monaco eventually looked back at her brother and brother in law.

“What will it be, *beau-frère?*” She asked England, highly doubting that her brother would be against it after having gotten Seychelles approval.

The English nation could just smile back at her and give both girls a small nod.

“You know, Monaco, I would have never thought I would be grateful to you at a certain point in our life,” England admitted plainly. “I would have thought you’d rather choose something against your interests than help me.”

“And I would have never thought that one day I would stoop so low to actually having to ask you something,” Monaco agreed, regally taking her cup of tea once again in her hands to take a small sip. “I still have some difficulty admitting that my brother chose someone so historically unsophisticated like you—”

England winced at Monaco's arrogant words, and took his own cup of tea to drown his sorrows in something good. Still, he gave her once again his attention when she met his stare right above the rim of the teacup.

"Still, there's no denying that you are made for one another," she continued with a soft smile, "and your attempts to act like a true gentleman are very much appreciated."

England smiled back at her and finished his cup of tea before finally going to hold his daughter tight to congratulate her, both on her independency and on her engagement.

"Be careful, my love," he told her softly, receiving a strong hug in return.

"I love you, dad," Seychelles answered him back, glad that everything had eventually turned out for the best.

France and Monaco just shared a knowing smile with one another and went back to their cup of tea while waiting their turn to congratulate Seychelles. Father and daughter in the meanwhile just cried quietly in one another's arms, but both brother and sister were glad to notice that, hopefully, those were only tears of joy.

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Six more years had to pass before France had the courage address his and England's problem, with the most devastating –for England– consequences.

At the end of 1979 America, being France's son way more than England's, had officially and politically married Japan. Seychelles and Monaco, instead, had privately married the year after.

Through all this familial turmoil, Canada just kept quiet and bid his time.

It was after one of their by now usual family lunches that France decided to eventually point out the obvious.

Canada and Japan were helping him out in the kitchen making tea and coffee, while he busied himself serving the *Paris-Brests* he had prepared the day before. Seeing France serving a pastry so high in calories, England's comment was quite obvious.

"France, isn't this a bit too caloric? You are going to make us all just fatter, America in particular."

"What about me, now!?" America protested, before he began quarrelling on the topic with his father, who was completely unaware of his half-husband's cold glare directed at him for the reprimand.

The one who had noticed France's anger at England's words was Japan, who was back with Canada bringing the drinks.

“France-san?” He asked worriedly, attempting to put a caring hand on his friend’s shoulders.

France walked quickly away from Japan's touch, however, bringing with him his own pastry to eat it in solitude on the nearby sofa.

“Mum?” Canada called for him too with his usual feeble voice, but not even him got any kind of answer from the French nation.

Thanks to their intervention, however, everyone’s attention quickly turned to the infuriated Frenchman.

“France, what's up with you?” England asked, then, interrupting the quarrel with his son to rise a confused eyebrow at his half-husband.

“It's not like I brought them behind your back, I *made* them in *your* very own house,” France bit back, filling his mouth with a forkful of the sweet pastry.

“Now, be honest,” England countered, guessing the damage to be easily solvable. “You banned me and America from the kitchen as soon as you could!”

“And you *let* me!” France pointed out harshly, still not looking at his half-husband and focusing on his dessert instead. “If you don't like what I choose to cook anymore, you can make your own food.”

“France!?” England yelped, now seriously worried, since France would offer to cook for him simply to prevent culinary disasters from being born.

France's statement worried the rest of their family as well, who shared quick meaningful glances among one another, uncertain about what to do or say.

“*France* what?” France asked acidly, pronouncing his own name in a pale mimicking of England's accent. “I can't even take care of my children in your opinion?”

“Who even said this!?”

“*You! Now!*” France protested heatedly. “You said that my dessert choice was wrong because it is too caloric considering America’s already caloric diet!”

“Mom, dad...” America attempted to interrupt the fight but to no avail, since England just stood up to glare at his half-husband cutting him out from the argument.

“It was just an observation out of my mind, it means nothing!”

“I know, everything you say means nothing! Like your promise to marry me properly!” France yelled back at him eventually. “You just wanted to make me stop resenting you for the Suez crisis!”

England stared back in shock at his half-husband, not really knowing what to answer him.

“France... We *are* married...”

"I'm married to you, but not vice versa!" France contradicted him, his voice almost breaking from the nerves. "Besides, you proposed in 1956, it was twenty-six years ago! What am I supposed to think?"

"That I'm working hard on that!" England screamed back at him, flabbergasted by even the idea that France could believe anything different.

"I don't believe you!" France's countered, however. "Or I would also have to believe you think I'm inept taking care of my own kids!"

"No one ever said this, and stop using them against me!"

"Now I also use them against you, thank you very much! Maybe I can *use* them like I want because they are not supposed to use *their own* brain, since they are mine!"

"France—"

"Mum, dad! Stop!!" Canada tried to interrupt the quarrel eventually, surprising all the other nations there. "What's up with you two!?"

"Ask *your mother*," England cut short, sitting back on his chair and proceeding to attempt finishing his pastry. "*He* is the one having his period."

France answered the provocation by throwing his empty plate at England, who professionally dodged it, making it crash against the wall. Luckily, considering how much they fought, they had brought almost every set of dinnerware in stainless steel.

"Dad, stop being misogynistic, " Canada admonished, putting his hands on his hips as he glared down at England.

"He keeps doing that, it's in *his* nature," France drawled annoyed, earning England's glare on him.

"Who is the one making a mess for no apparent reason!?"

"No reason for *you*, maybe."

"England, if I may," Monaco attempted to come to France's rescue. "It's quite obvious my brother would snap, in the end. He is seeing his kids moving on whilst he is standing in some sort of limbo..."

"He's not in a limbo, he is rightfully married *to me*!" England complained, his stare on Monaco betraying quite a lot of the hurt he felt at the accusation. "If he wishes to think himself as single, then it's only his own choice!"

Before England could finish his statement, France's fork followed his plate, at first directed at England and then crashing towards the wall after being dodged.

"For *whom* we are rightfully married, pray tell?" France yelled, eventually standing up from the sofa. "We are worldwide known as enemies! This and the fact that we are currently not

having many bilateral agreements, because we are trying to have a common foreign policy with the rest of the world, cover up for anything we do!”

“We still have the *Entente Cordiale*!”

“People thought nothing of it even after the WWI showed that it was made to work!”

“It's *their* problem!”

“It's *my* problem too since we agreed on an official marriage. That was the only thing I asked you!”

“I'm working on it!”

“You keep saying this, but you never delivered a single proposal in twenty-six years!”

A soft sniffing, coming from Sealand, was the only thing that made the two parents finally stop yelling at one another.

“My dear!” France was the first to acknowledge Sealand’s discomfort and to rush towards his youngest son to reassure and hold him tight. “Don't cry, please!”

“I'm sorry,” England offered then, looking guiltily at the rest of his family.

“We're kinda used to this, but Sealand is still a child,” America reprimanded his father, draping himself for comfort around Japan with a loud sigh, before turning annoyed to England. “Mom is right, though. They are small and very few in number contrary to the usual, but you *still have* some bilateral agreements. Just take one and go with it!”

“Our agreement wasn't just one among the others, though,” Japan took his chance to point out discretely to his husband. “It's understandable that England would like something better for France and himself.”

England sighed deeply and looked gratefully at his Asian friend. “Thank you, Japan.”

“Still,” Canada eventually took enough courage to answer back to his English father. “You decide everything a bit too much by yourself. Maybe, if you just talked more about what you are doing for mum's part of the marriage, it would feel less like you had completely given up on it...”

France looked up to stare with a big happy smile to his son, both proud of him and grateful for his words. Canada smiled back at his French father, a soft blush colouring his cheeks.

“Canada, I love you but I fear that you don't really understand how, when you are in a couple, you might also want to build up a bit of surprise,” England decided to explain Canada plainly. “Especially when you are an ancient couple like your mother and I, the how and when you do something are fundamental variables.”

“I might not be in an ancient couple like you two, but I *do* have a boyfriend, you know?” Canada argued against his father’s theory, earning everyone’s shocked stare on him.

Everyone's except France's, however. As the French nation looked guiltily to whatever wasn't his half-husband, however, he got immediately noticed by England.

"My dearest love?" England asked France coldly, his face and tone of voice evil and angered. "Would you mind telling me who I have to kill for laying their dirty fingers on my cute child?"

France held Sealand tight against himself, his face screwed up in a panicked and extremely guilty expression.

"C'mon, England, he's an adult. He can make his own choices!" France attempted to defend himself and Canada, only to perceive another menacing aura few seats from him.

"Canada is shit in making his own decisions, mom,," America countered angered, looking like the split image of his English father. "I'll crush with my own hands whoever dared to touch my brother!"

"Don't talk like I'm not even here!" Canada protested quietly. "Why you are asking him and not me, I'm sick of people ignoring me!"

"You are still under my Empire, young gentlemen, so watch your mouth!" England reprimanded Canada sternly. "Why did none of us know about this!?"

"Why would I tell you? It's my own business!" Canada countered irately.

"Your business is my business, have I made myself clear!?"

"He's Cuba!" Canada admitted eventually, making both his father and brother turn visibly pale.

"Fucking *Cuba*??? He hates me!!" America countered flabbergasted.

"I know! That's how we met!" Canada pointed out, blushing heavily. "He kept mistaking me for you, until we cleared up the misunderstanding and he invited me to his home two years ago."

"And?" England asked menacingly, his voice plain and void of emotions.

"And nothing," Canada admitted quietly, shrugging wearily. "We just got together... eventually."

"Two years ago I already severed my connections with him!" America yelled, slamming his hands on the table despite Japan's desperate attempts to calm him down.

"It's *your* foreign policy, not *mine*!!" Canada countered angrily.

"But yours is *mine*!" England pointed out, realising his mistake only when his son's violet eyes stared shocked at him. "C-Canada..."

"I'm severing connections!" The younger nation yelled quietly back at his English father. "I don't want to see you anymore!"

Canada then rushed quickly out of the door, soon followed by an extremely worried Seychelles.

"Canada!" England and America called for him, as they followed them outside to stop Canada and attempt reasoning with him.

Sealand just cried more at the commotion, urging France to bring him to sit on his lap to hush him quiet.

"It's normal, my dear," France whispered in his ear, rocking him gently. "Everything will be fine."

"It's not fine, brother," Monaco reprimanded him sternly. "I would have never thought it possible, but America is right: you guys need to give up your Empires. And I mean *all* of you, including America's economical dominion."

"You know that we can't do it," France replied to her. "It's in a nation's nature to try and dominate the others!"

"In *a* nation or in *you three* in particular?" Monaco countered haughtily. "Because I don't see the rest of the world couples destroying one another and messing up their relationships like you three do. At least not daily."

"I shouldn't have brought up the marriage," France insisted, however. "That was the problem... Now, if England loses Canada, all will be my fault."

"If I may," Japan pointed out courteously. "No matter how much of a friend England is to me, if he loses Canada-kun it would just be *his own* fault, and I'm saying this despite the knowledge of being quite the imperialistic nation myself."

"You and America don't throw plates at one another, though," France countered, taking a by now half-asleep Sealand firmly in his arms in order to lay him on the more comfortable sofa.

Not managing to free himself from the child nation's tight grip once he had gotten there, however, France could just sit down on the sofa to arrange Sealand to sleep in his arms, his head resting quietly on France's shoulder despite the still ongoing sniffing.

"I try to use a different approach with America, since I knew about you and England way before I met him," Japan admitted, earning only France's confused stare on him. "It's true that England doesn't talk much and that he prefers to simply act by himself, but you just assume. You think about things by yourself, turn them into a reality in your mind and then you just lose your cool."

Monaco could only approve Japan's analysis with a regal nod of her head, whilst France just sighed at his own stupidity.

"You are right," France admitted with a self-deprecating smirk.



"Of course I'm right, America inherited the worst part of both of you," Japan took his chance to explain. "Still, I have the will to try and moderate *him*. You do it for your kids, but not for yourselves."

"I like the relationship we have, it's just that I would like to be the one spoiled for once..." France lamented, pouting childishly to Japan. "And even if he doesn't, he could at least appreciate me for what I do!"

"Nothing will be enough until he actually shows to care about your need to sign up papers, won't it?" Japan asked gently. "You know that you can't have a candlelight dinner every day, however, don't you?"

"I know, and currently it's going on very well," France admitted, sparing a moment to smile at Sealand now fast asleep in his arms and give him a light kiss on the top of his head. "It's just... so perfect that I can't understand why I don't have a bloody paper signed with our names on it. I know that he thinks differently, but to me it doesn't feel like an actual marriage if it doesn't have a legal contract..."

"You feel like it's borrowed time," Monaco offered, receiving only a small nod from her brother.

"It wouldn't even be a problem if we decided not to go through with it, but he could at least talk with me about it. This is really being left hanging in the middle... And now even Canada ended up being caught in the middle and we also fought in front of Sealand, something we managed to never do when Canada, America and Seychelles were children, despite openly being at war against one another..."

"I highly doubt that it was an attempt to hurt England hiding the fact that Canada was going out with Cuba, though," Japan asked rhetorically.

"Of course not," France admitted. "I had a grandfather, you know? He wasn't strict at all, but if there was one thing he wished for us to keep in mind was to be proper Roman children. That was something difficult for me to do whenever I was with England. We were so different and yet so similar that we kept influencing one another, even though grandfather's idea was to just turn England into a Roman country..."

"He sometimes even reprimanded me for going to him, usually because I ended up describing his quirks like something cute and not something to eradicate," France continued, not managing to hide a soft smile at the memory. "My family helped me out, though... Italy was his most adored grandson, so he could happily distract him. Spain was great at creating diversions to cover up for me... knowing how irate England and America would be at the news, how could I give him up?"

"Then, if you didn't intend to hurt them, why are you giving yourself the blame?" Japan asked eventually.

"Because I hid it from them," France admitted quietly.

"It's wrong wanting to command other people's hearts... or their foreign policy," Japan reminded him plainly, shortening the space between himself and France to kneel beside him and smiling up at him. "They *will* understand in the end though, don't worry."

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Eventually, Japan proved to be right, since England and America *had* to come to terms with the news, no matter how unwilling they were to do so.

Once they had reached Canada, who eventually stopped his escape to allow Seychelles to comfort him, things had not progressed smoothly; England and America finished screaming at Canada only when he began crying in earnest and yelling at them that he hated them deeply.

Seychelles had reprimanded both her father and brother and sent them back home, while she attempted to calm down Canada.

Once back home, however, America was welcomed by Japan's yells and England by France's quiet acceptance. Unable to cope with the unusual attitude their companions had towards their misconduct, both nations had eventually capitulated: America hoping to have his quiet husband back and England imploring France to scream at him or something.

When Japan had just yelled more and France served England pudding, father and son just burst in tears.

Eventually, England gave Canada his freedom –within the Commonwealth, that was– and allowed him to go out with whomever he liked, while America promised not to be too much of a bother with his brother's personal affairs; he was, however, going to plan even more ways to worsen the embargo against Cuba as much as he could.

It was only three years later that England finally received the news he was desperately waiting for and ended up hugging to death his own prime minister for it, despite hating her quite a lot.

He called his working hours quit before time and rushed back home, where he found France nested between two high stacks of papers. The French nation looked up from the document he was currently revising, glancing at his half-husband over his reading glasses, his expression surprised.

"*Bonjour, mon cher,*" He greeted him. "You are early, but I'm still not done with my own work!"

"Good afternoon, my love," England greeted back, a smart smirk plastered on his lips as he walked towards France to kneel in front of his station and stare back up at him, his chin placed over his arms resting crossed over the desk. "Can't you take a small break? Believe me, you really want to see this."

France, who had already risen a suspicious eyebrow at his half-husband for being addressed as *my love*, widened his eyes in shock hearing the rest of the proposition.

"Who are you and what did you do to England?" France asked plainly, earning England's chuckle for it.

"C'mon, France, I even hugged the Thatcher for this, you *must* come with me!"

"And now I have the final proof that you are not my England. That woman is heinous!"

France concluded, sitting properly on his chair to look his lover from a better distance.

"Besides, you are always yelling at me that I have to do my work and now you ask me to take a break?"

"I'll bring you out to dinner," England upped the ante.

"We're in England."

"A French restaurant, then."

"We're *still* in England."

"*France!*"

"Alright, alright!" France gave up, placing his reading glasses on the table as he stood up.

"Let me put on something decent, since we're eating out."

"We don't have all the day, my dear," England took his chance to remind France after his half-husband had disappeared upstairs to their room, despite barely managing to contain his own happiness himself.

"*Va te faire foutre, mon amour~*" Came France's plain answer, before England could hear the sound of their bedroom door open.

"Who thinks French is the language of love never heard a Frenchman speak" England muttered to himself as he stood up once again and went to put aside his work suitcase in favour of a more elegant bag.

"What were you saying, *Angleterre?*" France asked loudly from upstairs, only to make England tremble in discomfort.

"Nothing, love, just hurry up!" England called back, hoping that his comment had really gone unheard by his lover: the only one more creative than France with insults and swearwords was South Italy.

It didn't take France too much to come back down and, when he did, England was strongly reminded once again why he kept putting up with the dramatic nation.

He had only changed into a white suite with a pink shirt left slightly open on his chest and had combed his hair so that they were falling in gentle waves over his shoulders... and yet England's heart stopped in his chest like it had done one thousand years before.

"You're a vision, France," England complimented him, taking his hand in his and leaving a small peck on his cheek. "And you overdid it with your cologne..."

France snorted hearing England's last part but kissed England lightly on his lips nevertheless.

"You like it, though."

"Yes, I do," England admitted, blushing at his own words. "C'mon, let's go!"

England dragged France out of their house and back to his office, much to his lover's surprise.

"England?" France asked, unsure about how to deal with all the Englishmen working at the palace that were currently staring at him, apparently wondering who he was and why he was there.

"C'mon, get inside," England told him however, hushing his lover inside his office as soon as they had gotten there.

"Arthur, what the—!" France cried out as the door closed behind them.

"Close your eyes, my love," England told him with a large smile on his lips.

"You'll really worry me if you keep calling me *my love*," France admonished him, despite following his lover's instructions. "What is it, this time?"

England went back to his desk to take the papers his prime minister had given him before and put them in front of France, so that he could see them properly.

"C'mon, open your eyes..." England told him, his heart racing in his chest.

France did as he was told and blinked a couple of times at the documents before pouting sadly.

"It's written in English!" France protested coldly.

"France, yours are already in Paris written in your bloody frog language! Just read this up, I know you can!" England yelled back at him, barely managing to contain his own excitement.

"It's—" France began to say, his jaw dropping in surprise each moment more as he kept reading the document England was showing him.

"They put up an international announcement for the contract," England confirmed enthusiastically. "France, we're really doing it! We are getting married!"

"The underwater tunnel... Are we really doing it?" France asked in complete shock.

"We still don't know what will be chosen, but whatever it will be, it will link us! It's what we have waited for until now!" England explained to France, putting the papers back on his desk and taking France's hands in his. "We are getting married, *mon amour*."

The French term of endearment caught France attention, compelling him to finally stare up at his half-husband despite barely seeing him.

*“Angleterre, je-”*

*“Je t’aime, République Française,”* England interrupted him, kissing him hardly on his lips, and then keeping kissing him with small pecks on the lips at each following sentence. *“Je te chéris. Je t’adore. Je t’aime plus que tout au monde!”*

*“Angleterre,”* France interrupted him eventually, eventually managing to stop England mid-kiss. “If you keep speaking French they will take away your British citizenship!”

“Marry me, France,” England just pleaded then, looking like a desperate man. *“S’il vous plaît, épouse-moi.”*

France leaned towards England to capture his lips in a soft and chaste kiss, letting their lips linked for as long as it took to England to feel like he was melting in hot lava.

“Yes, England,” France whispered on his lips as soon as he found in himself enough will to break the kiss. “Of course I want to marry you.”

“France!” England called him as he threw his arms around France's neck.

“And it will be marvellous, my love,” France promised him as he took England's lips once again in a soft kiss. “Get ready to see the full extent of my French splendour!”

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**T.B.C.**

# When in France

## Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

France's sovereigns found themselves basically missing their nation more or less for the following two years, since all of France's focus was on organising his wedding with England.

As France had requested years before, the marriage was worldwide announced along with the plans to construct the Channel Tunnel early in the year 1986.

The planning for the construction of the underwater tunnel between France and England made the sovereigns of both nations meet rather frequently, reason why, eventually, France's ones resorted asking for England's help, at least to have France looking at what was most urgently needed.

Such a request wasn't an unheard occurrence for England, since during the course of the centuries he had frequently turned out to be France's government only hope to get to their nation. That was why he had gladly accepted to try, only to have even his requests completely ignored this time. All of them aside for the revising and co-signing of the Treaty of Canterbury, to be honest, and that only because it was necessary to allow the Eurotunnel project to move on.

Luckily for everyone, sometime after the winning contract was chosen and the beginning of the work scheduled for December 1987 France finally re-emerged with a detailed wedding program that made England hope to finally have his half-husband back.

*"Angleterre! Look here!!"* France called England one afternoon, bursting the door to the dining room open. "I think I got it the best way possible!"

England stared impassive at his half-husband as he kept sipping quietly his tea.

France's hair had grown so long it reached his butt, his beard was due shaving several weeks ago and his once immaculate shirt had turned slightly yellow and presented some blue stains of ink.

"You are not coming near me until you have a shower, changed your clothes and shaved properly," England declared strictly.

"Have a look at this first!" France insisted, pouting miserably as he attempted to show England his papers.

"You look like a plonker, honey," England stated in a plain monotone, eventually putting down his cup of tea to walk towards his lover, take the plans out of his hand and drag him upstairs to the bathroom of their bedroom, only to throw him violently under the boiling water and finally attempt returning to France a civilised appearance.

The Roman Empire would have been proud of him.

At the end of England's efforts and after half an hour of yells and screaming, France was once again squeaky clean, dressed properly and with his beard trimmed very short. Satisfied with his handwork, England dragged France once again on his feet and led him to sit on their bed.

"Now you can tell me," England declared, putting the papers he had confiscated before on France's lap. As soon as he had his plans once again in his hands and England's ok to explain, France's eyes shone bright in happiness once more.

"I'm sure you will love it too, *Angleterre!*" He announced merrily. "The actual construction site will open in December, but the formalities will be ongoing the whole time, so we can plan it for the 8 of April. This way we can still link it to the *Entente Cordiale*. What do you think about this, *mon cher?*"

"Are you talking about April 1987?" England asked, taking a quick glance at France's papers. "It will be before the actual beginning of the work... The first drilling won't start until the second half of 1988..."

"There will be plenty of joined ceremonies before the actual beginning, I thought that our wedding could fall among those," France explained overexcitedly as he retrieved the French conferences and ceremonies planning. "This way, we can invite all the other nations too and both our sovereigns will be there already!"

"I can't believe you actually thought about some way to save money," England couldn't stop himself from noticing. "When they say that marriage change people, then they are really onto something..."

"*Va au diable, Angleterre,*" France told England plainly. "I want for our wedding to be gorgeous, not to risk another bankruptcy!"

"Alright alright! But are you really sure that you want all this, France?" England asked a bit unsurely, as he took the sheet over which France had written the nations he intended to invite at the marriage. "I mean, you signed up basically all of the world..."

"Yes, I want this." France told him, looking straight in England's eyes with determination. "It's almost a whole millennium that I'm waiting to scream to the world that I love you, and that's exactly what I'm planning to do!"

England accepted with a big smile his lover's resolution and leaned over him to give him a small peck on his lips. "I'm certain that it will be perfect, my love."

"Tomorrow I'll go asking my sovereigns for the place and the arrangements, then I'll go order the rings," France anticipated him, sounding absolutely overenthusiastic. "I can't wait to show them to you, it took me a whole week but now the design is perfect!"

"Will it be a surprise?"

France answered with just a wide grin to his lover, then he jumped over him to embrace his neck tightly.

"I'm so happy, *Angleterre!*"

"I'm happy that *you* are happy, France," England answered back holding his lover by his waist and attempting not to end up swallowed by France's enthusiasm. "But remember that I need my husband back *before* we marry. And our children need their mother and your people their nation."

"But—" England stopped France's remonstrations by placing his index finger on his lips.

"I meant —let me help. I'm part of this equation too, try to remember it."

"England..." France whispered, smiling back at him in adoration. "Thank you."

"Well, I'm the one who made you wait. I think that's just proper!"

"So, can we go shopping for a suitable suit right now?" France offered, feeling only then the annoyance at having secluded himself for so long.

"Hmm..." England considered, taking the end of France's low ponytail to move it over his shoulder. "If you wish to do something about this, this should come first in my opinion. Besides, I'm quite sure you already made a design for the suits, we don't need to go shopping for those!"

"Of course I did," France admitted plainly. "I didn't know you had something against long hair, though..." he felt the need to point out however as he stared at his low ponytail.

"That's why I said if *you* wish," England explained, "I personally don't really care, I love your hair no matter how long you keep it."

"How do you want me?" France took his chance to flirt, then, as he laid down on the soft mattress of their bed. "Hot hunk or gracious lady?"

"My love," England protested with a smart smirk, hovering over his lover, "you know you can be both, no matter the length of your hair or that of your skirt."

France laughed quietly at his half-husband words, and then proceeded to tug him down over him.

"Are you sure that you won't have any regrets, if I cut my hair?"

"Nah, long hair is quite a bother, especially when *you* lean over me," England told France matter-of-factly. "I don't mind you keeping it longer, but I won't cry if you shorten it."

"I think I'll give my hair a few more days then, just to make you aware of how fascinating long hair can be," France teased, grinning back at England. "If you don't have to work this afternoon, I'd really like to get started on the suits and call a tailor..."



"You have almost two years of work to catch up, though," England countered reproachfully, earning France's sad pout for it. "Let's do some planning to put in act your wedding plan, shall we? Give me a couple of hours to re-arrange my appointments and reschedule my work, then we'll move back to France. Half a day of work and half day of preparations for the wedding should be a fine compromise. I guess you already worked out most of the problems, didn't you?"

"Of course I did, *mon cher!*" France countered haughtily, before sighing in quiet resignation. "Alright, *Angleterre*, I'll call my sovereigns then. I'm quite sure Jacques listed me as missing..."

"He *did*. You really should have kept an eye on your sovereigns more... while we were arranging for the personnel in charge of the Channel Tunnel they demanded for it to be half French and half British. It will double the people involved if we can't work around the edges," England reprimanded him, hoping to find an ally in his lover.

"I think is a good proposal," France countered instead, blinking innocently at his lover and earning only England's resigned sigh for his trouble.

"Bloody Frenchmen..." England pointed out, falling with his whole weight over France before rolling on his back and eventually sitting up. "C'mon, complicated man, you call Chirac and I the bloody Thatcher. One of them will certainly be more pleased than the other."

"You always had a strange relationship with your elected sovereigns, you know *Angleterre?*" France noted, taking his own chance to stand up and flank England.

"I'm a constitutional monarchy, it is to be expected," England pointed out. "If I got along with them, I would be a Republic."

France chuckled at England's remark and went to retrieve his mobile phone, only to be stopped by England.

"Trust me, you will need more than just thirty minutes. Use the phone in my study."

"I could keep it in charge?" France countered sheepishly, swallowing hard at the implication of not having a technological time limit.

"France." England plainly threatened.

"Alright alright, no excuses allowed," France agreed, walking towards the door like a man condemned. "If he kills me, though, it will be your fault."

"If he kills you, it will be your own fault for neglecting your duties until now!" England called after him, as he dialled the number of his prime minister.

Only after he heard from downstairs France's desperate pleas for forgiveness, did England chuckle at his lover's reaction and press the enter button.

Despite attempting to keep France's head at ground level, England had to admit to be quite excited himself by the prospect of finally arranging his own official wedding with France.

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Eventually the day of the wedding came, and England could only be glad that everything was about to end.

If he ever had the chance to redo his whole life, England would have proposed on the seventh of April 1904 to get married the next day, the eighth. All things considered, that would have been the best solution to simplify his life during the last century. With a bit of luck, the World Wars would have also been avoided, since if they had already been married it would have been obvious to everyone that the *Entente Cordiale* was *really* supposed to work.

As his life was now, however, his heart raced in his chest, his hands were sweaty and his eyes blurred. Next to him, Scotland and Wales were attempting to calm him down, but to no avail.

The palace in which they had gathered, for instance, was opulent to say the least, something that made his own House of Lords cry. When England had pointed out that maybe it was a bit too much, France had pointed out that a formal marriage could be recognised in France only if done in a city hall, and since he was the French Republic it had to be the main one in Paris.

Unfortunately for England, Hotel de Ville really was the Paris city hall, no matter how many France tour guides he checked.

Blasted Frenchmen.

Basically the entire world had accepted the invite –probably everyone hoping to see them killing one another rather than getting married– and so many nations had given them their best wishes that England felt faint. It was... a little too much.

Even his own suit, designed by France himself, fit him far too perfectly and made him look too... too bloody *à la mode*. His own brothers, when they had seen him, had laughed heartedly at him.

When he was just about to pass out in his brothers' arms, France's voice made him fall back abruptly into reality.

"England! What are you doing here? Our sovereigns were searching for you!" The French nation cried out, as he threw himself in England's arms to hold him tight. "Besides, I missed you~"

"You looked quite busy talking with people to me," England countered plainly, attempting to clear up his mind a bit with deep intakes of breath.

"It's no fun if you are not with me, *mon amour*!"

"It's a bit too much for me, France," England admitted, staring up at his lover so that his distress could be more than obvious. "I feel like I am suffocating."

France disentangled from England, then, and stared back apologetic at him. "I just wanted for this to be perfect," he offered him sadly. "*Je suis désolé, Angleterre...*"

"It *is* perfect, France. It's just... We are not—" England said with a nervous laughter. "I'm not used to this."

"You want me to call it quit? I really meant it, it's no fun at all without you—"

"France..."

England had no time to reassure France that Scotland put his arm tight around his brother's neck, dragging him back close against his chest.

"Ignore him, brother in law. He will man up and survive this." Scotland cut short, tightening his hold around England's throat. "Just keep him on a short leash, so you will avoid him from falling when he actually faints."

"So nice," England managed to mutter, finding it impossible to free himself from Scotland's tight grip.

Before long, however, Scotland let England go by his own will, pushing him in France's ready arms.

England coughed a couple of times because of the half asphyxiation, but he had eventually to admit that France's cologne had the strange result to calm him down.

"How are you, *Angleterre*?" France asked him worriedly, searching his green eyes for confirmation.

"I'm fine," England answered his half-husband and, to his surprise, he realised that he truly was.

He made himself a bit more comfortable in France's arms and then hid his nose in the crook of France's neck, taking a deep sniff. He smelled like home, and it was all England needed to relax.

"Are you sure?" France asked unsurely, holding England tighter to himself and caressing reassuringly his back.

"Yes, I'm sure," He confirmed, nuzzling his neck before districting from France. "We should move on, however. Your cooks will be waiting!"

"*Oui, mon trésor*," France answered him with a big smile. "Let's go get our Heads of State!"

"I still can't believe you doubled the officers, you dealt with this worse than your sovereigns with the Channel Tunnel," England took his chance to protest, checking behind himself that his brothers followed him.

"I said official, *mon amour*. If I said it, I meant it!"

It took France only a couple of minutes to arrange the beginning of the ceremony with the still unsure Queen Elisabeth and president Mitterrand, who had been identified as the most suitable to do the task by their own Prime Ministers. This, obviously, despite both Heads of State opinion.

In the recent years, gay rights had marched forwards in both nations, but especially in Great Britain they were viewed still quite suspiciously. Gay marriage, on top of that, was something they had still never even thought about, no matter if both governments kept telling themselves that they were talking about nations and not properly male humans.

England's brothers were the first arranging themselves next to England's prime minister, while France had to go drag Spain and Prussia to their place by sheer force, helped by a more than willing South Italy.

While they solved the witnesses' problems, the rest of the nations divided themselves roughly in two large groups that moved enough to the side to leave a long corridor for the spouses in the middle.

France had originally actually considered a proper division based on their alliances or family ties, but he had eventually given up, considering that many were both or neither, even at the same time. This, they both had to admit, was probably because their political decisions had always depended more on doing the opposite of their lover rather than on a properly structured plan.

Finally, the ceremony could begin, starting with both nations walking up the aisle to stand right in front of their Heads of State, France embracing tightly England's arm.

As the two sovereigns read all the formalities to their nations in the two languages, the rest of the nations could just stare in awe at the ceremony and at the two spouses, safe in the knowledge that –despite this being their wedding– if their friends finished the day without attempting to throttle one another it would be a miracle.

The most at ease of them all was Italy, who was honestly too used to England and his cousin's quirks to still feel bothered or worried about it. It was thus with some surprise that he felt someone slowly approaching and dragging him a few rows behind, apparently so that the two spouses wouldn't hear them.

When Italy eventually turned to see whom he was, his clear eyes opened in pure shock.

“Grandpa Roma–” he managed to say, before the Roman Empire put his large hand on his mouth and gestured him to keep silent, but Italy's eyes filled with tears and he flung himself at his grandfather's chest, holding onto him tightly. For a moment, the Roman Empire hesitated, not entirely surprised at the gesture, then he wrapped both arms around the other nation and waited until Italy's muffled sobs finally calmed down enough so he could speak.

At last, Italy sniffled and let him go, smiling even with his red eyes.

“Grandpa Roma... what... what are you doing *here*?”

"I couldn't miss the rascal's wedding," he explained with a wide smirk, nodding in the direction of his older grandson. "You know, something told me it would eventually end up like this~"

"France doesn't look much a rascal to me," Italy countered dubiously, staring once again in confusion at the back of his older cousin. "Besides, all things considered, he has honestly turned England in the fine gentleman you hoped~"

"You are too naive, my adored Italy," the Roman Empire countered, as he himself stared once again at the two spouses, "when you marry your spouse wins, you know? And among them the winning spouse is England, no matter how much France resembles me!"

"We are attempting to move on as a society, Grandpa," Italy reprimanded his grandfather, resolute about defending his cousin no matter what. "They fight a lot, that's true, but this took them long enough because they regard each another as equals!"

"France is my grandson, though," the Roman Empire pointed out, chuckling as he winked to a surprised Italy, "and no matter how hot headed he can be, his weak point is between his legs. The one who can satisfy him there wins."

"Grandpa Roma!?" Italy asked flabbergasted, not managing to understand what point his grandfather was attempting to make.

"Still, even like this, it's fine, I guess~" the older nation eventually commented with a relaxed sigh. "Looks like they have definitively given up on conquering one another with armed forces, after all..."

"Yeah, still the idea of they just merging is not unheard of..." Italy admitted quietly.

"Will you give him a kiss for me?" The Roman Empire asked eventually, offering Italy a fake outgoing smile. "I obtained permission to come back only for an extremely limited amount of time, you know?"

"Can't you stay until the end of the ceremony? I'm sure Big Brother France would like to see you!" Italy protested heatedly, taking a firm grasp of his tunic as if he could honestly prevent the Roman Empire from disappearing once again just like that. "We all missed you, Grandpa~"

"I'll watch a bit more of the ceremony in the back rows, but I'm not sure I can stay to the end," the Roman Empire admitted to Italy with a soft smile. "So, just promise me. In case I disappear once again before I can talk with him..."

"Alright, Grandpa," Italy promised then meekly, staring down at his feet in discomfort. "But... when... when will we see you again?"

"I hope at *your* wedding," the Roman Empire countered cheerfully, grinning knowingly at him. "I already met the future husband, I'm so glad he is a proper fan of mine~"

“Eeeh??” Italy asked, not understanding what his grandfather was referring to. “Who did you meet? When!?”

The Roman Empire just laughed at Italy’s questions and disappeared in the direction of the back rows, finally allowing Germany to find North Italy and drag him back forwards.

“You are close family of one of the spouses, you should stay in the *front* row!” Germany reprimanded him, annoyed.

Italy attempted to defend himself, but while he had been chatting with his grandfather the ceremony had apparently already moved forwards to the exchange of the vows, rigorously in double language.

While they were saying the ritual vows, Sealand had reached his parents holding a cute white cushion over which laid the rings France had designed specifically for their wedding.

“Give me mine, *Angleterre*,” France told him when his turn to give England the ring was supposed to come, blushing slightly as he gave him a big excited grin.

The request was a bit suspicious, considering that this was France's part of the wedding and that there was no reason why his lover had to let him go before him. There was only one reason: there must be something with the rings, something that France wanted England to see first.

The island nation, therefore, turned to Sealand, who with a grin that could rival his French father’s pointed him to the ring on the left. He nodded and looked at the seemingly plain golden band to free it from the ribbons.

As he took it in his hands, however he could feel the very delicate lines that decorated the sides, only barely embossed in the gold. Then, he finally looked at the upper part and his heart stopped in his chest.

“France, you are such a bloody *romantic*,” England couldn’t stop himself from telling his half-husband as he looked up at France to meet his radiant blue eyes.

“Well, I’m French,” France countered with a grin. “Do you like it?”

“I love it. You know I always wanted you to be signed off only for me... This is honestly the embodiment of it...”

England looked once again the golden band, admiring the thin blue line crossing it for its whole length and writing ‘*Dover*’ in looping blue cursive, right on the top. When he found enough strength in himself to move on with the ceremony, he offered France the palm of his hand so that France could give him his hand to put the ring on his finger.

Once he had France's well-manicured hand in his and he moved the ring up to half the finger, however, England stopped to stare unsurely at his lover.

“I don't know what to say, France,” he admitted, his voice cracking from the emotion. “I thought that you would never want to wear my name and now that it’s happening...”

"You will wear mine, *Angleterre*. It's just fair," France explained, happy that England had appreciated the rings but also partially concerned about his emotive reaction.

"But you are *France*!" England pointed out. "I could never have you and now—"

"—I'm yours," France concluded, leaving a small peck on England's forehead. "C'mon, finish this up. I want to give you yours."

England nodded and finished putting the Dover ring on France, by now crying freely. France took then his chance to get England's ring from Sealand's cushion and offered him the palm of his hand.

England gave him the hand that wasn't busy trying to wipe the tears out of his eyes, but eventually he ended up just crying more as he noticed the red line crossing his own ring writing '*Calais*' in the same looping cursive the blue line had written Dover on France's band.

"I hate you," England told France eventually, making his lover laughing nervously at him.

"As the Eurotunnel will link Dover and Calais, so we will be linked through these Dover-Calais rings," France explained to England, as he finished putting the Calais red ring on his lover's finger. "I really wanted to be one with you, *Angleterre*, that's why I designed these rings~"

"I want to be one with you too, France. And you are killing me with sweetness, that's why I didn't want a formal marriage: so I don't have to burst in tears in front of everyone!" despite his words, England reached out to put some strands of France's hair behind his ear and then let his hand rest on his cheek, silently inviting him to lean towards him.

Catching his lover's signal, France moved forwards to make their lips meet in a chaste kiss. As they kissed, all their friends erupted in cheers, finally reminding them that almost the whole world was witnessing their exchange of vows.

Because of that, when they separated, even France had begun crying.

As England looked behind his husband, however, he noticed that they weren't the only one in tears, since another nation was crying his eyes out in the furthest back row. He gestured France to turn and, as he followed his instructions, France too could finally see the Roman Empire.

"The Roman Empire?!" France whispered in shocked surprise, before starting to run towards him.

He eventually managed to reach him and to hold him tight by his waist, but as soon as they touched the older nation's body began to disappear.

"Congratulations, kid," France managed to hear faintly, soon followed by the feeling of a caring hand caressing his hair.

It was only a matter of seconds, though, since he soon found his arms once again empty.

"Grandfather..." France murmured, staring discomfited at his hands.

Not much time had to pass though, before he felt a caring hand on his shoulder, attempting to comfort him. As he turned to see who it was, he found Italy there, staring sympathetically at him. Before France could attempt to say anything, the younger nation closed the space between them and placed a soft kiss on each of his cheeks.

"Grandpa told me to give you a kiss if he didn't manage to do it before disappearing," Italy explained cheerfully even with the tears in his eyes. "I guess he was glad to be able to watch the whole ceremony, though. He was quite sure that he wouldn't have the time even for that~"

"Thank you, *Italie*," France answered him, deeply moved by his cousin's words. "It means a lot to me the fact he wanted to be here... I would have bet that he was against me and England..."

"I don't think that he was quite alright with that, all things considered," Italy admitted, earning France's worried stare on him. "But looks like seeing you happy counts more than Roman hegemony~"

France chuckled at Italy's words and took his chance to hug him.

"Thank you, I needed to hear this."

"You're welcome~" Italy offered, hugging him back. "Congratulations, Big Brother. *Ti voglio bene.*"

"*Je t'aime bien aussi, Italie.*"

Both cousins took their chance to grin to one another, before South Italy came to offer his own piece of mind on the matter and the ceremony could finally resume.

Between receiving congratulations from most of the nations present at the ceremony and managing to reach once again both their Head of State to actually sign the official papers, it wasn't until two in the afternoon that they could move everyone to the reception.

England had managed to convince France not to cook it by himself, still the Frenchman had hired French cooks, imposed the menu and had supervised the workings. During the whole cooking arrangement, England had simply retired himself into a corner to watch in fear his half-husband at work and to sip quietly his tea, safe in the knowledge that France would never ask for his opinion, despite the hopeful stares he sometimes received from the French personnel.

Thanks to the experience, he had come to the conclusion that the only being in existence able to make a Frenchman like the English nation was the French nation himself.

England, however, couldn't really say a thing about the food once he'd had the chance to taste it, no matter how few comments he offered to France about it. He decided to avoid saying that it was inedible, though, just to make the day pass without any attempts to kill one another.



The sitting disposition had taken into account familiar and political relations, so near them there were their colonies, but also their whole families and respective partners. This obviously meant that Cuba wasn't sitting too far from America.

Despite what had become his usual way of dealing with America, Cuba that day decided to act the most civil he could manage, something that frayed America's nerves even more than the usual. When the island nation had begun acting overly caring towards Canada and feeding him some of the things he knew his boyfriend liked the most, America was just about to make a scene worth one of England's tantrums.

Luckily, it was his own English father who glared at him and warned him *not to dare ruining his mother marriage*. Seeing their brother desperately attempting to get through his wedding without disastrous consequences made Scotland and Wales even gladder to have been appointed as England's witnesses.

Also France used up most of his time to attempt defusing risky situations with his most charming smiles and his witty talking.

Despite everyone's fears then, thanks to the two spouses complicit work, the reception came to its conclusion with only minor banter.

After some games, the wedding officially ended and everyone went back to their homes. Despite their parents' reassurances about it, America, Canada, Seychelles and even Sealand didn't stop at France and England's apartment in Paris, therefore leaving them free to actually spend their first night together as husbands as they liked.

They had walked back home hand by hand, deciding that a quick stroll under the stars would help them regaining a bit of their cool after the overload of emotions of the day. It didn't, however, and as they were talking about everything and nothing as they approached their home, they both found themselves tightening the hold on their husband's hand and brushing lightly their shoulders together to acknowledge their closeness.

Once they eventually entered the empty apartment, England went straight to hang his coat, only to find France's hands already there to help him out of it. He let his husband divest him of it, and as soon as the coat was hastily hanged, France's arms were already around his waist to hold him; only then his hands roamed from his sides up to his chest, while his lips began devouring England's neck.

England moaned at the assault and let his head fall on his husband's shoulder, angling it slightly to the side to allow France better access. France's hold on him tightened as his tongue trailed up the bare length of England's neck to bite jokingly his lobe and ear shell.

"Shall we go to bed?" France whispered in his ear as his right hand moved up to grasp England's, tightly pressed against the wall to sustain him. As they entwined their fingers and felt the solid presence of the golden band around their ring-finger, though, they both felt their heart stopping in their chest. After a first moment of sheer panic, however, the odd feeling just prompted them to hold onto the other's hand tighter, as France rubbed his cheek against England's in warm affection.

"I love you, France," England confessed, turning enough to look France in the eyes and steal a pleading kiss from his husband's lips.

As their lips touched, France quickly deepened the kiss, his tongue craving to taste every inch of England's mouth. They broke the hand holding, then, so that England could face France fully and they could press desperately one against the other, chest against chest. As the kiss grew more intense, France eventually drove England against the wall, as his thigh found its way between England's legs.

The heat of the kiss and the pleasure of France's thigh slowly rubbing against his crotch, quickly made England's head spin and his strength to keep himself steady on his legs any time weaker.

*"Je t'aime aussi, mon Angleterre,"* France managed to whisper over England's lips eventually, before plunging once again his tongue deep into England's mouth.

England moaned inside France's hot cavern and let his own tongue meet and dance with France's in his mouth. His hands found their way into his husband's wavy locks, attempting to bring him even closer, as if it was even possible. At the same time, France brought their bodies closer, pressing England even more against the wall and rubbing his thigh harder against England and, subsequently, himself against his husband's thigh, turning all of England's resolutions to pure mush.

"France... please," England pleaded, deciding that they couldn't really keep making out like that, and then put enough distance between himself and his husband to talk to him properly.

France barely nodded at his request, seemingly having reached he himself the breaking point, and took England's hand to lead him towards their bedroom; he slammed the door behind them and quickly captured England's lips with his own once again, starting to work on his husband's jacket and pants.

England returned the favour in the same desperate rush, at the same time taking his chance to furtively tease all France's weak points.

As they were both naked except for their shirts, France parted from his husband and got rid of his own in front of England's slightly confused stare. He had no time to wonder what France's plan was, however, since his husband embraced him once again, his naked body feeling enticing and hot against both his bare legs and his silk covered chest.

France's hands grabbed England's butt cheeks firmly at first, only to move slowly up to caress his back under his very expensive shirt; he then moved his hands to undo its buttons, only to tease England's nipples from above the soft silk as soon as he had revealed the slim yet toned chest to his hungry eyes.

England moaned at his ministrations, though he knew he was close to reaching his limit to how long he could bear France's teasing. To be honest, at least with himself, he had already passed that point several minutes before.

“France...” he weakly protested, beginning to kiss lightly his husband's cheek then lower to his bearded jaw, wanting to make his lover feel his same need and desperation.

The teasing had the desire effect to stop France from his torture on England, allowing the island nation to finally feel France slightly trembling against him at the kind gesture, before he finally resolved to free England from his shirt and move on. France guided then his lover to the big bed, making him lying face down on the mattress, so that he could properly worship England's back with big-mouthed kisses and small bites.

England groaned at the change and did his best not to hump the soft mattress so early in their tryst. France chuckled at his husband's reaction and moved slightly up to lick and tease the shell of England's ears.

“Am I a bad parent if I'm glad the kids chose not to stay tonight?”

“You are asking this to the wrong nation,” England managed to whisper back, despite his laboured breathing. “I fucked your brains out with our kids downstairs waiting for us...”

France's lips morphed to a sly smile against the soft skin of England's neck, before he shifted to entangle once again their fingers together with ease. He then proceeded to leave a trail of sweet kisses down his shoulder to his arm, to finally end on their clasped hands. He left a fleeting lick right above the more visible vein on the back of England's hand and then continued to suggestively tease his long fingers and the crevice between them, finishing his ministrations with a devoted kiss right on top of the Calais ring.

England groaned at the feeling, both overwhelmed by the pleasure his lover was giving him and by the heart-warming sensation of being completely loved and worshipped.

When he felt that he had given enough attention to England's hand, France then moved back to lick and tease the well-refined muscles of his husband's shoulders and trailed soft kisses down his spine. He took his time to caress England's sides and knead his firm butt cheeks, and finally he moved to get the Vaseline from his bedside table. He took a generous amount of it in his hand and then moved his still clean one to England's hip, in order to lead it upwards and have a better access to his cock.

“Are you ready, *mon amour*?” France whispered to his ear, as he reached between his lover's legs to cup his groin with one hand while the other began teasing his entrance.

So overwhelmed as he was, however, England could only nod, desperately attempting to get a hold of his own voice. France chuckled at his husband's frustration, and inserted a single finger. He felt England tremble in his arms, and landed a quick kiss on his cheek.

“Cry out, if you need it,” France teased him plainly, leaving another kiss on his temple as his finger began stretching England in earnest.

England stopped himself from screaming back at France that they were in an apartment in the centre of Paris so, even if they didn't have the kids at home, they still had their neighbours to think about. After all, if he even had attempted to voice his irritation, only soft moans would have made their way out his chipped lips.

When France added a second finger and began scissoring him in earnest, England's mind felt any and all strands of reason leave and to keep a hold on his voice didn't even seem proper.

"Fra- France..." England moaned, grasping tightly his hands in the soft sheets beneath him and chasing the gentle stroking of France's hand on his cock with small thrusts of his own.

In the meantime, France allowed a third finger to join the others and after some work deemed England ready enough. He reached once again for the Vaseline and coated his own cock with a generous amount of it.

England moaned at the loss of France's fingers inside him and of his hand on his cock, but didn't have to wait much before his lover was once again behind him, ready at his entrance.

"I'm going in, *Angleterre*," France whispered to his ear.

He waited until he received a small, tight nod from the island nation and then he penetrated England fully with one single, slow thrust. England felt the breath leave his lungs at the sensation, and arched his back against France's chest to feel him even more against his skin.

"F- France... move, please-" England managed to say eventually and soon France obliged, building up a steady rhythm that would slowly become frantic.

Swept away by the moment, none of them could now stop the continuous and soft moans leaving their lips. France's arms firmly wrapped around England's body, giving him the support he needed to thrust even harder.

Eventually, he managed to brush against England's prostate, and the island nation let out a soft cry similar to a choked breath as his muscles clenched around France. That had France growing harsher with his trusts, soon sending both of them over the edge.

Feeling himself just about to come, one of France's hands eventually reached between England's legs to stroke him properly; before long, France came inside his husband and England followed soon after, both of them collapsing one over the other on the soft mattress.

"Fuck it, France," England managed to say after a while of desperate attempts at getting his breath back, "you broke me..."

France chuckled against England's shoulder and took a weak hold of England's hand, leaving sweet kisses on its back.

"Always at your service, *mon cher*," he teased, "you know I'm at the top of your list whenever you are searching for someone willing to hurt you~"

England groaned at France's words and weakly shook him off his back. France took the hint and rolled off him and to his back, his face turned towards England.

"You're lucky that I love you more than I hate you," England grumbled, this time making France laugh openly at him.

"*Je t'aime, Angleterre~*" were the only words France could manage, as he stared deep into England's deep green eyes.

"I love you too, idiot," England countered with a grin, managing to move enough that he could actually kiss France properly on his lips. "And you will be mine, now. *Forever.*"

"And ever," France agreed, a knowing smirk on his lips. "Just as you will also be mine."

England returned the grin and they huddled closer to one another, as they searched in themselves enough strength to disentangle and have a shower.

Even when they found it, however, they reached the conclusion that the shower could still wait a little longer.

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**T.B.C.**

## Chapter End Notes

"C'est donc cela Chirac nous a menti, mais il l'a fait sympathiquement. Même si les Français le savent, c'est peut-être pour cela qu'ils ne parviennent pas à lui en vouloir." - G. ERNER #Charlie Hebdo 1419#

## Honey moon & Maple syrup

The day after their definitive and official wedding, England began doubting that he had done the sensible choice by getting married with his frenemy and lover.

They had decided that, despite having been together for more than seven hundred and seventy years, a honeymoon was needed and, just not to risk fighting amongst themselves until one of the two killed off the other, they had chosen Venice as their destination. This, obviously, after having fought over and consequently crossed out each and every one of the cities and smaller villages in both France and England, starting from Paris and ending with Llanwrtyd Wells.

Before their departure, originally scheduled for early afternoon, England had left France alone at home the whole morning in order to settle some last minute work matters through his embassy in Paris.

He had come back just after lunch only to find his husband dressed like the very image of France.

England took a deep breath, then, and closed the space between himself and his husband, got out from his pocket his metal cigarette case and opened it in front of France.

“Want one?” England offered with a deadpan, hoping that the sarcasm was obvious enough.

Obviously, it wasn't.

France looked up at him, seemingly surprised to hear the strange offer, put the copy of *Le mode* he was reading on the coffee table next to the glass of red wine, and stood up from the sofa. The fact that the offensive French magazine was at least out of the picture somehow managed to lessen a tiny bit of England's annoyance.

“Thanks...?” France answered suspiciously, only to end up with the tip of his index finger pinched as England quickly closed the cigarette case before he could take one and slapped his husband behind his head with the flat of it. “Ouch! What the hell has gotten into you??”

“I'm not crossing the border with you looking like that!” England stated plainly, crossing his arms on his chest and keeping his glare on his husband.

France rose an inquisitive eyebrow at England, who could only take a disappointed look at the red beret France wore and that clashed deeply against his white and black striped top.

As France turned his head to the side in irritation, something else caught England's attention and he got closer to his husband to take a long sniff of France's hair.

“You didn't wash your hair after you cooked lunch, you have the smell of Camembert all over you,” England reprimanded France heatedly, putting his hands on his hips as he stared back at his husband. “Hell, love, you look like the bloody embodiment of France!”

*“Angleterre, mon cher, I am the embodiment of France,”* France countered annoyed, mimicking England’s pose. “I thought you had already figured that out!”

“This ridiculous attire is too much, even for *you*,” England protested, his eyes growing in surprise as France stole the cigarette case from his hand and actually took one.

France lit it up, then, and placed the small case back in England’s hands, inhaling deeply before exhaling a puff of white smoke right into his husband’s face.

England didn’t move an inch and just kept glaring in disapproval at his lover until France – exasperated by the lack of an answer– placed the cigarette back between his lips, slightly to the side, and with a quick move took his husband by his waist and dragged him over his shoulder.

“What the fuck are you doing!? Put me down!” England protested, punching France's back violently and earning a light slap on his butt for his trouble.

“I’m turning you into the proper embodiment of England,” France countered, directing himself towards their bedroom with the still punching and kicking island nation safely on his shoulder.

As France actually began working his magic on his husband not long afterwards, however, England’s yells ended up being heard throughout Paris.

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France and England arrived to Venice three hours later than they were supposed to, making Italy, who was supposed to wait for them, dread for the safety of his cousin and Romano, who had been with his brother just to keep an eye on him and Germany, propose getting wasted on wine to celebrate France and England's demise.

Germany, attempting to salvage the situation, had eventually managed to make both brothers see reason and had helped Italy to reschedule the program of the day and change some of the reservations they had made.

When their friends eventually arrived, nevertheless, the German nation had to admit that Italy’s fears might have even been accurate. The sight that welcomed them was in fact one he would have never imagined.

France was dressed with a red beret, shades, a white and black striped top with three quarters sleeve and a large collar that showed some of his hairy chest and jeans so tight that they didn’t leave much to the imagination, not about the muscles of his legs or the size of his package.

England, on the other hand, was dressed with a loose fitting T-shirt sporting the Union Jack all over, a studded dark leather jacket and dark leather pants. He also had a line of piercings

on the shell of his right ear and dark lipstick on his lips.

“What the fuck have you guys done to yourselves?” Germany asked to the both of them, quite shocked by the sight.

Uncaring about the air of defeat surrounding England and Germany’s shock, France and Italy instead reached for one another in the middle of the two groups to share a hug.

“How come England has your lipstick on him?” Italy asked France after the formalities, making Germany even more upset by the whole situation.

“He thought my attire was excessive,” France told his cousin as a way of explanation, for reasons that Germany couldn’t fathom. Such a justification, however, was apparently enough to satisfy both Italy and Romano, who just nodded at the French nation approvingly.

Germany, giving up on the descendants of the Roman Empire, walked to England’s side in order to help him with the luggage, stealing it right out of the distraught nation’s hands.

“Are you fine, England?” he asked gently.

“I am.” England stated in a confident monotone. “I perfectly knew what I was getting into.”

“Is that really true or are you just attempting to convince yourself?” Germany felt the need to ask, earning only England’s resigned sigh for it.

“It *is* true, *that’s* the problem,” England confessed, sounding somehow less defeated than before. “Why am I even fine with him, Germany? He’s excessive in everything he does!”

“This goes for the both of you, to be honest. Besides,” Germany countered plainly, “I’m going out with his cousin, are you sure you should ask *me* this kind of questions?”

Both England and Germany took their chance to sigh deeply at their weak willpower towards their lovers, and turned around to face the three Romance Nations like men walking the plank.

“Where are we heading first?” England had the courage to ask eventually, after Italy had lead them out of the train station and he could finally see the Grand Canal right in front of them.

“We’ll have to get to San Marco by water bus, your hotel is that way,” Italy explained cheerfully. “Unfortunately, we can only start the sightseeing tomorrow, because you really got here too late to start today~”

“It’s his fault!” both husbands said at the same time, only to glare at one another in shared disappointment.

As they approached the ticket office, however, France rushed forward to get his chance to chat up the young lady at the ticket stand.

“*Bonjour, chérie*, do you speak the language of love?” he asked, his blue eyes never leaving the young girl’s ones, his tone low and suave.



France had the desired effect on the cashier, who blushed a deep scarlet and found herself barely able to even ask the French nation what he meant. At the third sexual innuendo, however, England marched behind him, took a handful of France's hair and slammed his face against the glass of the ticket office, effectively breaking France's nose.

"What the fuck has gotten into you??" France yelled at his husband, holding his bleeding nose with both hands.

"I should ask you this! We married less than 36 hours ago!" England shouted back at him instead, grasping his collar tight to drag France towards him. "Show a bit of frigging *respect!*"

"I was just getting us information!" France countered hastily, his face already a half mask of blood.

"You were fucking flirting!"

"So what if I was!? You knew I was an innocent flirt since the beginning!"

"I'm fed up with your behaviour! I'll divorce you!"

"I should be divorcing you! You are an abusive husband!"

"So what if I was? You knew I was violent since the beginning!"

As France and England kept yelling at one another, Italy went to the ticket office to get the tickets instead of his cousin, in front of the relieved stare of Germany. The German nation's relief, however, didn't last much, since Italy soon began flirting with the cashier just like France had done before him.

Unnerved by the situation, Germany nicely led a confused Italy away from the stand, leaving him at the opposite side of where the other two nations were fighting. As Germany dragged Italy away, Romano found himself alone in front of the young cashier, who took her chance to smile politely at him. Before she could ask him if he needed any ticket, however, Romano blushed a deep scarlet and flew towards his younger brother to hide behind him.

Deeming the situation secured, Germany took this chance to efficiently buy the bloody tickets by himself. By the time the waterbus arrived France and England were back to speaking terms, which left the German nation feeling both relieved and exhausted at the same time.

Optimistically, Germany decided that he could however count on Spain to share his sufferance in the evening, as soon as he reached them at the hotel where France and England would be staying. If he couldn't win Italy and his family by himself, he could at least cry about their hopelessness together with whoever shared his same dilemma.

Certainly, England would happily accept to join the friendly reunion.

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When the drinking evening finally came, nevertheless, Germany wasn't really sure that the result was quite what he had in mind, and not just because he had sincerely forgotten that Spain was *also* related to France and the two Italies.

He finished up the lasts of his beer and ordered another, taking his chance to look at his side towards England, who was drinking straight from yet another bottle of wine despite being already completely wasted.

Before asking England the dreaded question, however, Germany looked to his other side, where Spain was lively chatting with Romano and Veneziano. All the three Romance nations had their own glass of wine, despite being Italy the one who kept draining each and every bottle they ordered for the three of them. No one of them were as drunk as England, though.

That consideration made him turn once again his attention to the island nation, who had in the meanwhile changed his now empty bottle of wine for a new one.

“Oi England, I thought you would have liked to get a break from France... That's why I had proposed the night out, you know?”

“Uhn?” England asked, fighting the alcohol for coherence and slurring his words. “I *need* a break from *him*, but *he* needs a break from *me* too.”

Just to prove his point, he pointed towards his husband, who was currently dozing off with his head on England's shoulder, the last glass of wine he had filled still half full in front of him and his broken nose carefully bandaged.

“Shouldn't take a break mean you two go out to drink *separately*?” Germany asked confused, earning back only a blank stare for his trouble.

“But we go out to drink together,” England pointed out, not understanding where Germany's problem laid. “We are annoyed at something, we go out to drink together. We always do that, even when we are annoyed at one another...”

“My point is,” Germany tried again, taking a long sip of his beer before continuing, “if you drink together, you're not really taking a break from one another.”

England kept staring at him, barely seeing him through the daze brought on by the alcohol.

“Then we don't need to take a break from one another.” England decided eventually, focusing back to drain his bottle of wine. “Where's the fun in willingly going out to drink without him?”

Germany could only blink a couple of times in shock at the island nation's conclusion, staring even more flabbergasted at his friend as England apparently noticed that he had left his lover by himself too much, and had taken his chance to leave a kind and sloppy kiss on his head; even more strangely, on Germany's point of view, France groaned a bit in his sleep and automatically cuddled closer to England.

The scene left Germany highly traumatised, and he felt the need to take another long sip of his beer.

“Hola, Germany!” Spain eventually brought Germany back from his thoughts, draping himself around the German nation and grinning madly back at him. “Why are you losing your time attempting to reason with Europe’s hopeless cases? *We* were talking about things that makes you feel youthful, wanna join?”

“What for? You will answer tomatoes and Romano,” Germany protested quietly, earning Spain's evil grin for his trouble.

“Aren’t those the only things worth mentioning?” Spain countered.

“You are almost normal and sober, can I ask you something that's bothering me?” Germany waited for Spain to nod happily at him and then took a deep breath before continuing. “Why did you want to come drinking with Romano, tonight?”

“I never see him! What kind of question is that?” Spain answered, pouting miserably as he rose his eyebrow in cautious suspicion. “Why this, though? Didn't *you* want Italy to come? I thought we all were on the same page...”

“Of course *I* wanted Italy to come, but Italy is honestly happy to come with me! Well at least when I’m not cooking,” Germany attempted to explain with quite a lot of embarrassment. “On the other hand, however, Romano and England look way worse for wear each time they are in your and France’s company!”

“You don't appreciate *tsunderes* enough, Germany! If these two look like they don't care, it doesn't necessarily mean that it’s true!” Spain explained, laughing heartedly before pointing behind himself to the two Italies, who were currently fighting over which snack went best with the wine they were drinking. “Romano is honestly happy that I'm here with him, no matter if he says the opposite~”

“The British Empire looks way more *yandere* then *tsundere* to me, to be honest,” Germany protested, sighing loudly. “Besides, it's not Romano being *tsundere*, it's you being a masochist...”

“Well, France is much more of a masochist than me and he himself is far from being perfect,” Spain pointed out, not even attempting to deny Germany's accusations, “besides, both France and England are quite happy at the moment, I wouldn't worry until one of them says something!”

“Something!? Today they were already talking about getting a divorce—” Germany attempted to explain, only to be silenced by Italy, who in the meanwhile had moved in front of his lover to place his index finger over his mouth.

“Here we say: *tra moglie e marito non mettere il dito*,” Italy told him merrily. “It roughly means that you should never interfere between husband and wife. Even more when one of them is *yandere*, I would say!”

“Uhm... we have a similar saying,” Spain approved, taking his chance to grab Romano by his waist to drag him on his lap. “We should marry too, Romaanoo!! You're too cute!”

“Fuck off, you *bastard*!” South Italy countered, only getting Spain fussing even more over him for his trouble.

As Germany turned to watch once again France and England, he noticed how France had finally opened his eyes once again and he and England had begun kissing slowly, somehow proving Spain and Italy's point; he sighed at the scene, then, and turned to stare at Spain, who was currently struggling to keep Romano on his lap, and eventually at Italy, who was still smiling kindly at him.

All things considered, Germany wasn't sure that he would survive the whole week.

He did think that despite Italy's laziness, considering his older brother, Spain and France Germany might have been the lucky one among all of them, though.

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The construction of the Channel Tunnel forced Englishmen and Frenchmen to work side by side, making the collaboration and slight annoyance between the two nations grow exponentially.

At the same time, however, France and England didn't stop working on their foreign policy in order to create a more peaceful and collaborative atmosphere in the continent and outside of it; this period of economical prosperity made both of them overly trustful about their chances to actually resume France and Italy's proposal from the 1950, even if in a way that would be perceived less scary by France.

In 1993, they decided to sign the Maastricht pact, something that was sold as the first step to that European federation the two Romance nations had dreamed about, even though it had been reached with plenty of disagreements not just between England and France, but also between England and the rest of Europe.

America and Canada didn't worry much about it, since they had gotten used to their parents fighting since forever and neither did Japan, considering that he had even fought a World War because he couldn't stand America and his parents; the one who could barely stand the family tensions was Cuba, who had to withstand his in-laws quarrels just as much as America plainly taking it out on him.

Sometimes, he had to honestly ask himself where Canada had come out from.

Moreover, Cuba had his own problem to deal with and, considering they were quite substantial, he certainly didn't need America bothering or molesting him with pretended acts of kindness; Canada didn't see America's propositions as too bad, though, so much that eventually one day he actually decided to voice his thoughts on the matter.

“You really should start accepting America’s help, if he’s honestly willing to do it,” Canada dared to speak up to Cuba eventually.

His boyfriend, who had been frying some sliced plantains for their dinner, was so shocked to hear his suggestion that managed to lose the grip he had on the pan, ending up heavily sprinkled with the hot oil he was using.

“Fuck!” Cuba swore, attempting to undress as quickly as he could as soon as he had turned off the fire.

Canada cursed himself seeing the result, and rushed to the bathroom to get some ointment to put on the burns and a wet towel.

“I’m sorry, Cuba!” Canada offered shyly as he started tamponing his boyfriend’s reddening chest with the wet towel.

“It wasn’t your fault,” Cuba reassured him kindly as he took the towel from Canada’s hands to clean his burns by himself, “you could have said something that stupid when I wasn’t dealing with boiling oil, though...”

“I didn’t think it was a stupid idea at all,” Canada complained, as he moved to apply some balm to Cuba’s hurting skin. “He might be annoying about it, but if you truly need his help, why shouldn’t you accept it?”

“If he honestly wished to help me, he would lift the embargo and all the other bans he put on me” Cuba pointed out, annoyed having to say all that aloud. “Every other thing is just pity, an attempt to play with me or a way to make me dependent on him, and he could screw himself with all of these options, for all I care. I can deal with myself!”

“I just wish that I could do something to solve this mess,” Canada admitted, sighing quietly to himself. “My brother is a bother, I can’t deny it, but he isn’t really a bad guy... Or at least, not on purpose...”

Cuba’s dark eyes stared on Canada, who was still quietly dealing with his wounds, and the island nation found himself unable to not smile at him or to think that he honestly was too cute. He put his index fingers under Canada’s chin, then, and gestured him to raise his head up to face him. As soon as Canada stared up questioningly at him, Cuba allowed their lips to meet in a gentle kiss that was soon returned by his lover.

“You are too cute for your own wellbeing,” Cuba sighed, still staring adoringly into Canada’s violet eyes. “*And*, you are also too cute to be blood related to those three!”

“Cuba...” Canada reprimanded him, his eyebrows slightly furrowing in annoyance.

“Yeah, I know it’s not your fault,” Cuba pointed out, stretching a bit the muscles on his chest to understand how bad his condition was. Feeling most of the skin on his chest hurt badly, however, he stood up and directed himself towards his bedroom, taking his chance to take Canada’s hand in his as he passed by him. “Will you make me company? I’ll finish dinner later.”

“I could cook dinner this evening, you know?” Canada attempted to protest, despite following Cuba docilely.

“I know you can, but I want to spoil you a bit when you are at mine,” Cuba countered, letting himself fall back on his bed as soon as he reached his bedroom.

He tugged Canada to lie over him, ending up wincing in pain as the other nation actually lost his balance and fell clumsily over him.

“Sorry!!” Canada quietly yelled, screwing his eyes closed in guilt and hiding his face behind his hands, as he curled to his side.

“Why are you saying that you're sorry? I dragged you over me,” Cuba reassured him, smiling adoringly at Canada's embarrassment and poking his reddened cheek. “C'mon let me see your beautiful eyes.”

Canada didn't remove his hands from his face but parted his fingers just enough to peek in Cuba's direction.

“Are you in pain?” he asked dubiously.

“A bit, but looking at you makes up for it,” Cuba offered with charm, caressing Canada's head and leaving a soft kiss on his forehead.

“I would think that looking at me would have just annoyed you even more,” Canada confessed, putting his arms around Cuba's waist and effectively hiding his face against his chest once again.

“Why would you?” Cuba just asked surprised, staring down at his lover.

“Because of my face...”

It didn't really take Cuba much to understand Canada's point, especially considering how they had met.

“Well, you really look alike,” Cuba admitted, feeling Canada clutching tighter against him, “but the resemblance really stops there. I honestly admire Japan... I don't have his same stamina to deal with someone like America!”

“Doesn't it bother you, though?”

“Uhm?”

“That my face looks so much like my brother's...” Canada asked once again, this time looking up to stare at Cuba in the eyes.

Did it bother him, honestly? As long as he didn't straighten his hair and put on light blue contact lenses it didn't bother him much, but Canada truly had just to shorten his hair a bit and get the right light on his glasses to get confused with his brother.

Cuba groaned at the consideration and took his chance to take away Canada's glasses and put them on the bedside table. Canada blinked a couple of times at him, probably more in confusion than to focus better on him. The sight of a bewildered Canada staring up at him without his glasses made the island nation's heart melt, and Cuba found himself hugging him tightly.

"Cuba?" Canada asked him, not understanding what was going on in his lover's head.

"Only you can be this cute, so it's really not your face that annoys me," Cuba decided to finally attempt explaining to Canada. "What annoys me is how few changes are necessary to make you look like him. It's unnatural that two people so at the opposites look so much alike..."

"W- what if you use that at your advantage?" Canada asked almost inaudibly, his face becoming bright red in time record as he lowered it considerably.

"Advantage?" Cuba asked surprised, smiling teasingly to Canada despite his better judgement. "What is thinking that cute head of yours? If there's one side of your family that I don't mind particularly, it is the one you inherited from France!"

Somehow, that managed to turn Canada even redder.

He bent his head enough to hide his eyes behind his hair, then, and at the same time he moved upwards to straddle Cuba's legs. Still attempting not to watch Cuba directly, he quickly stripped, so that he was dressed in only his boxers.

"If you keep hiding your face I don't really understand why it should matter whether you look like America or not?" Cuba reprimanded his lover, despite enjoying the show. He reached up to pinch Canada's rosy nipples, and welcomed Canada with a smart smirk as soon as the tease finally earned him his lover's eyes back on him. "Now, that's better!"

Canada swallowed down his embarrassment and reached over Cuba to get back his glasses and a bottle of water from the bedside table. He put his glasses back in place and wet his hands before passing them through his hair.

"Cana... What the hell are you doing?" Cuba asked shocked, as he saw the water straightening down Canada's soft curls. By the time his lover had finished his preparation and had put the bottle away, Canada was looking like his brother much more than usual.

Instead of answering, Canada proceeded to move himself between Cuba's legs to attempt freeing his lover from his boxers.

"Wait, Cana—" Cuba couldn't finish what he wanted to say, however, that the feeling of Canada's soft fingers on his groin literally took away the breath from his lungs. "Fuck!" He swore then, as the grip on his hardening shaft became firmer and Canada's hand started joining the other to tease his perineum and the underside of his balls.

Canada allowed himself a small smirk at the reaction he had gotten, and then quickened the movement of his hand on Cuba's cock as he bent lower and proceeded to fully tease Cuba's

balls with his lips and tongue.

When he felt he had tortured his boyfriend long enough, Canada went down on him, swallowing his cock whole and making Cuba swear once again. Side-tracked by Canada's skilled ministrations, Cuba soon began forgetting that everything had started with Canada pretending to be his brother.

Despite being lost in the sensations his lover was giving him, Cuba's eyes never left Canada, dazed by the irregular movement of his head as he sucked him off. It was a well-known rhythm made by a well-known mouth, therefore it was only when their eyes met and he noticed Canada's teasing glance towards him that a resemblance that wasn't supposed to be there struck him.

"C-Canada?" Cuba asked, the awkwardness of it all making him come down from his high.

"What? Don't you like it anymore?" Canada asked, his gaze expressing a slight worry that somehow managed to calm down Cuba. "I thought that you would have liked the idea of America servicing you. Everything you want to do to him, you can do it with me..."

"What!?" Cuba yelled, grabbing Canada's upper arm to drag him up to level with him. "I'm *NOT* your fathers, Canada! If I liked hate-sex, I would have your brother as my lover, not you!"

"I thought you would have liked it," Canada whined softly, his eyes looking bigger than they were as his eyeglasses moved down his nose.

Cuba sighed at his lover's stupidity, took away his dropping eyeglasses and ruffled his hair as much as he could, so that it turned wavy as it was supposed to be.

"Here you go," Cuba concluded happily, fairly satisfied with his work. "This is the nation I want in my bed. I already told you, I don't need your fucking brother."

"Doesn't it turn you on even a little bit?" Canada asked highly confused. "The idea of fucking my brother, I mean?"

"Not in your faintest dreams," Cuba reassured him, taking his chance to get his lover out of his boxers and retrieve the lube from his bedside table. "If you want to use your resemblance to America to make me happy, I'll make you read aloud *The Capital* of Karl Marx!"

Canada laughed at the suggestion, but as soon as Cuba's thick fingers began teasing his entrance he felt his focus becoming each moment fainter.

"Cuba—" He moaned against Cuba's skin.

"Here you go, honey. Call my name like your brother never would," Cuba teased, making Canada blush a deep scarlet.

"Don't say these things..." Cuba barely whispered.



“Says the nation who thought that I would be turned on by the idea of fucking his brother,” Cuba reprimanded him, finally penetrating his lover with his finger and eliciting a soft whimper from him. “You are too cute, you know?”

Cuba stared in delight at Canada’s deeply concentrated expression and allowed him to drape himself around him, his arms tight around his neck and his face partially hidden against his shoulder. As he felt Canada’s muscles starting to loosen, he added a second finger and then a third, so that soon it was hard for Canada stop himself from whimpering and letting out soft mewls.

“Are you ready, *amor*?” Cuba asked as soon as he felt Canada ready, as he moved them so that the tip of his cock was at Canada’s entrance.

He waited for his lover to settle himself the way he preferred and then smiled at him, resting his forehead against Canada’s. Canada smiled back at him and nodded, prompting Cuba to kiss him deeply on his lips when he finally entered him.

Canada’s whimpers of discomfort got swallowed down by the heated kiss, then, until Cuba began thrusting up in earnest and Canada’s lips fell open as he tried to take in more air, only to end up gasping.

“Are you alright?” Cuba asked, cupping his lover’s cheek with one hand as searching for his eyes. Canada barely managed to nod and smile at him, before he felt the need to tighten his arms even more around Cuba’s neck to maintain his equilibrium.

“More, please...” Canada whispered softly, before a he let out a choked cry as Cuba took his cock in his hand and started to lazily stroke him.

“I adore seeing you like this, you know Canada?” Cuba managed to let out, as he moved them in a more comfortable position, with Canada laying down securely on his bed.

He waited for his lover to look up at him once again before kissing him deeply and going for the finish, now working on his lover’s cock in time with his desperate thrusts. It didn’t take them much to come and to Cuba to fall boneless over Canada... Only to wince in pain at the sudden hit of flash against burned flash.

“Ouch” Cuba whimpered, rolling quickly to his side.

Canada took some time to take some well needed gasps of air, before turning to his lover dubiously.

“You adore to see me fucked?” Canada asked almost inaudibly, his eyebrow risen in doubt. “Then you see that you should have liked my trick from before...”

“You are such an idiot, Canada,” Cuba sighed aloud, dragging his lover against his chest despite the hurt that the action still brought him. “The expression you have when I make love to you is the furthest from your brother’s I can imagine... That’s why I love it the most. You might have the same face, but this expression I’m certain that’s just yours.”

Canada blushed scarlet at Cuba's admission and hid his face against his chest before muttering a faint thanks that prompted Cuba to burst in laughter at his lover and hold him even closer.

For a while, none of them spoke, simply enjoying the closeness and the afterglow.

"I might consider accepting some leeway from your brother, if you insist," Cuba conceded eventually, earning Canada's unsure stare on him.

"You sure?"

"Not really," Cuba admitted. "But if he has a brother this cute, I might even attempt establishing some kind of contact. My connections with Russia are quite gone, after all. One day I might actually have to deal with him..."

"Sorry for suggesting this," Canada admitted quietly. "I just hoped that we all could get along together."

"Start hoping that for your parents, Canada," Cuba teased him, as he relaxed against his lover's body.

"You are right," Canada admitted, pouting at Cuba's smart comeback. "The rest of my siblings and I think that they will never get through this Europe projects without killing one another at a certain point..."

"If you guys are going to start betting on how long they will withstand this joined scheme, I'm on!" Cuba offered, laughing at Canada's prospective.

"Let's hope that it won't come to that, though..." Canada felt the need to point out, though, as he stared up at the ceiling, rather worried, "America says I'm shit at betting..."

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**T.B.C.**

# Making the European Union through 9/11

Europe was, to put it mildly, a secondary project to France and England. Therefore, the two married nations took their chance to properly celebrate the opening of their beloved tunnel in 1994.

Just to remind themselves where it all had started, in 1995 they also created the *Entente Cordiale* scholarships scheme, hoping that the name of their beloved agreement could remain in the minds of their people longer than the single day in which they celebrated their anniversary.

Still, for most of Europe they were generally considered just enemies on stand-by; the Channel Tunnel itself got mixed up into the European project starting with Maastricht, so much that some people and nations even thought that it was actually made thinking about Europe.

The one most annoyed with that misconception was England, who eventually damned himself for his agreement to participate at the European peace scheme. France damned the project as much as England, but the firm acknowledgement that it was a necessary wrong made him accept the situation better than his husband.

In agreement with his own prime minister, moreover, France even attempted to speed up the process, hoping to close a better deal and secure his interests. First and foremost, an economical and defensive protection for himself and his husband, something that was the same thing for the most part.

When many of the nations involved with Maastricht began discussing the chance to have a more proper European Union with a common currency, however, England draw a line he nicknamed '*Not even in your faintest dreams*'.

"C'mon, England, it's a good idea! You were the one suggesting common economy as an alternative to a common army," France whined, grasping tightly his husband's leg to stop him from leaving their shared hotel in Brussels, after yet another attempt to talk England into the common currency system.

"I frigging ratified the bloody Maastricht five years ago, what more do you want from me!?"

"But you signed it with out-put chance and against common currency!!"

"Of course I did! I have no intention to let Germany and all of you bloody idiots drag me down with you and end up off the rails because of his bad leadership!" England shouted back at his husband, as he attempted to get free from France's tight grip. "Let me go this instant!"

"You don't need to go away earlier only because we disagree!" France kept pleading, though. "We have still many other things to discuss!"

"I'm leaving because you're trying to make me join your bloody coin!" England pointed out in annoyance. "I already told you, I'm keeping the Pound sterling!"

"At least try it! Why won't you??"

"France, why the hell are you so annoying??" England yelled one last time, before successfully managing to free his leg from France's tight grip.

Now that he was free to go, however, he could just stare at his husband, who was still laying splattered on the floor.

"Honey?" England asked dubiously, staring slightly worried at France, who just answered looking up at him like a scolded dog.

"Because I keep forgetting to change my money whenever I go somewhere..." France admitted with discomforting honesty.

England sighed at the dumb admission, and closed the door of their hotel room basically in the face of half the other European nations.

"France, you keep forgetting because you're a narcissist," England reprimanded kindly, leaving his trolley next to the wardrobe to sit open legged in front of his husband, his elbows pointed on his knees.

"Since when is it a problem?" France whined, earning England's resigned sigh for it.

"France, you are the only one who thinks that being narcissistic is not a problem!"

"I thought you didn't mind!"

"I don't," England admitted, shaking his head in surrender, "I won't go away, but I won't accept the Euro either. Are we fine with this?"

France sighed and nodded, despite biting his lower lip in a pitiful show.

"The one coin I was mostly bothered to change was your Sterling," he took his chance to complain.

"It's not a nice thing to say, France!" England scolded him, attempting not to let his annoyance showing too much.

"But I'm giving up my lovely Francs myself!"

"And no matter how much I hate your money, I think you're wrong. This is why I'm not adopting it for myself."

"Why? It does sound practical," France pointed out, staring back hopefully at England. "You will never risk to have the wrong coin when you are in the wrong place anymore, and you will also have no need to worry about bothersome exchange rating and stuff like that!"

“France, you will keep having different exchange ratings, the point is that they won’t be obvious. We don’t have common economy policies—” England pointed out, only to meet in front of himself France’s blank stare. “Ok, I’m sorry, it’s economy.”

“*Angleterre*, if that’s your reason to say no, then we just have to work on that, isn’t it?” France attempted to offer, a bit doubtful about having understood his husband properly. “Your problem *must* be something else.”

“I don’t trust Germany in this matter,” England eventually admitted. “And you are trusting him only because you –for some unknown reasons– trust Italy and you two are plain idealistic idiots.”

France pouted miserably at his husband’s cold words, making England laugh at him as well as prompting him to kiss his lower lip affectionately. The island nation, then, let his hand trail through France’s golden locks and let it rest on his cheek, staring at him deeply in his eyes.

“France, don’t worry for me and do what you feel like doing,” he offered France gently. “If everything comes to an end, you can have my Sterling.”

“I *don’t* want your Sterling,” France countered plainly, his voice flat and deeply annoyed.

“I’m allowing you to have an unofficial output chance, France,” England explained, resting his forehead against France’s. “I need to go back to my country for at least a couple of days, what about you? We forgot to arrange our schedules because of this whole Euro charade...”

“I’ve got several meetings scheduled in France for this week, too,” France attempted to remember, starting to count on his digits. “Then I have some short trips to Frankfurt, Rome and Luxembourg... *then* I have to go to America next Friday.”

“Give me your agenda,” England decided eventually, waiting where he was as France stood up and went searching for the small black book he still kept in his working bag.

England took his chance to laugh at the fine golden embroidery and at the small rhinestones applied to the front page to spell the words *Liberté Egalité Fraternité*. When he opened it, France’s neat and elegant cursive handwriting met his eyes. More than a working agenda, it looked like an original manuscript from the middle ages.

After surveying France’s appointments for the following days, he took out a pencil from its proper compartment and began writing his own schedule on the opposites of France’s notes.

“You wrote opera on Thursday? Who are you going with?” England asked after some time, noticing the odd appointment. England hated opera, so there wasn’t any surprise that France wouldn’t ask him to come. Usually, however, he would at least let him know when and who he was going with.

Without prompting, that was the point.

“Uhm? What appointment?” France asked, leaning over his agenda to remind himself what the heck he had agreed to. “Ooh! With no one. I’ve been asked to substitute the leading man,

the performer of Danilo, in *La Veuve Joyeuse*. It's an operetta, you should know it."

"*The Merry Widow?*" England asked, fighting with himself not to laugh at his lover. "*I won't marry you until you say that you love me?*"

France chuckled at England's provocative quotation and stole a quick peck from his lips.

"I love you," he offered, grinning madly at his husband.

"I already married you *twice*, though," England pointed out, chuckling at the silliness of the whole situation. "Can you get me a ticket? I wouldn't mind watching you on stage."

"I thought you had other things to do in London the next week."

"I do, but in a couple of hours I can be back in Paris with the Eurotunnel," England reminded him. "After I finish my last meeting in the afternoon, I can get to *Palais Garnier*, have dinner with you after the show had ended and, the day after, we can depart together to Washington. I have a meeting with America the same day you do!"

"It would be nice, but I thought you didn't like the opera..."

"Not much indeed: I like to understand what I'm listening to," England protested, making France laugh heartedly at the blunt admission. "But I want to see you on stage. Why didn't you tell me? Is this a first?"

"Of course not. I like these kind of things, I've been substituting performers since forever. Males and females alike!" France offered with a big enthusiastic smile, his eyes shining with the enthusiasm of someone that deeply loved the current topic of conversation. "People say that my best performance was the time I played Christine in the Phantom of the opera. I was a real beauty, you know?"

France's speech held so many strange news about his husband that England wasn't honestly able to pin point the stranger one of them.

"You can make a soprano voice?" Was all that left England's lips, before his brain could start functioning once again.

"I guess it's actually called sopranist, even though I'm better at singing tenor and countertenor," France explained, winking at England as he dramatically put his hair behind his ear, affecting pure superiority. "No one noticed the difference at the time, however, or they simply didn't mind..."

"Stop showing off, you idiot," England reprimanded his husband, blushing heavily despite attempting to regain a bit of his cool. "I do admit that I had forgotten that you had a knack for singing!"

"Because you never listen to me," France reminded him plainly, "you should do the music and I the singing, we're complementary!"

"We aren't, though," England pointed out annoyed. "You like accordions and extravagancies that turns everyone unable to understand what people are saying or doing. Just look at your performances during the bloody Eurovision: you *scare* people, you don't *entertain* them."

"How rude. As if I didn't notice that you have a habit of just doing the opposite of what I do even there," France countered, offering England a childish pout. "Besides, you could use a bit of variation of your boring standard, you know? You live off boring ballads!"

"Says the nation who, once he finally learns to use or do something, refuses to change for everything else," England drawled in a plain challenge to his husband to prove otherwise.

"I don't like modern technology..." France simply confirmed with a shrug of his shoulders.

"Exactly."

"But I could be your dazzling mistress at the Moulin Rouge while you play, if you only asked me to," France teased enticingly, moving on all fours towards his husband and between his open legs. "It might not be your thing, but I *know* you're not indifferent to the way I dress, male and female fashion alike~"

"You..." England said with a deep sigh before shaking his head in disbelief. "It's something that's bothering me since we were young... are you honestly aware of the differences between men and women?"

"But we're nations, we don't even *need* opposite genders!" France replied, crossing his arms on his chest in irritation as he sat back on his heels. "Besides, even the human distinction doesn't look like a big deal to me."

"You really are something else, you know?" England concluded with a loud sigh, giving up understanding his lover at all.

"But you love me, right?" France pointed out with a big knowing grin.

"You idiot," England countered blushing red, not really able to oppose France's statement. "I bet you were on stage most of the times I thought that you were cheating on me with Russia or Germany."

"I wasn't aware that you thought I was cheating on you."

"Do please tell me what are you consciously aware of, France. You are going to mash up your money with a bunch of nations with only idealistic ideals in common, and in some cases not even those!"

"Are we really fine about the Euro, *Angleterre*?" France felt the need to ask eventually, worried that his husband had resumed their main point of conversation.

"As long as you don't try making me join, it's fine with me," England reassured him plainly.

"Is this *really* the only thing?"

"Yep, because I know you will be fine either way." England continued in a way gentler manner. "Because I'll be watching you slightly from the outside... if everything derails, I'll be there for you."

"And I for you, *mon cher*," France offered kindly, earning England's smile and a kind caress on his cheek for it.

"Let's hope that the worst will never happen, shall we?"

"I agree," France sighed happily, tugging England's tie to get his husband closer to him. "We should be re-joining the others in about an hour, do you have any suggestions about what we could do in the meantime?"

"France, am I right guessing they gave us this break to grant you enough time to convince me to change my idea?"

"*Oui, mon cher~*" France admitted shamelessly.

"And you are willing to use it up to have sex?"

"Well, I tried and I failed." France reminded him, not even an ounce of guilt showing in either his mannerism or tone of voice. "There isn't much else I can try that won't damage our marriage. Therefore, I'd like better to do something that makes it better!"

"You are unbelievable, you know, honey?"

"*Merci~*"

"It wasn't a compliment..."

"I'm well aware of it," France concluded, taking his time to kiss England firmly on his lips, successfully managing to shut him up. "Are we doing it, then?"

"Most definitely," England breathed out, tugging France's head towards his to allow their lips to meet again and their tongue to entwine and play.

As the two lovers went on kissing and manhandling one another, all the other European nations sighed and eventually moved uncomfortably away from the door of France and England's room, realising that even their last chance to get England accept the Euro hadn't gone well.

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England did manage to drag the whole family to the opera, much to Seychelles' delight and America's desperation. Using France's (human) name, he even managed to get the central box on the first balcony, balcony that was luckily big enough to fit all of them.



Before the end of the first act, America and Sealand had already fallen asleep and Monaco had been traumatised by how many jokes there were against the Frenchmen; in the meantime, England, Seychelles and Canada had attempted to explain the libretto the best way they could to Japan and Cuba.

Before the end of the show, Cuba wasn't so sure that his political isolation was much of a problem anymore.

England, on the other hand, even before the end of the play didn't really know what to think about the performance, since it was so '*France*' that it scared him. France like he portrayed himself whenever they were somewhere filled with other nations and people, to be precise.

He really was one hell of an actor...

Was that why they couldn't manage to make the rest of Europe believe that they were a proper couple? And this despite France's opulent wedding in front of the whole world, England wanted to add.

He was so lost in his thoughts that he realised that the play had finished only when the audience erupted in cheers and the curtain closed in front of the bowing actors.

"Dad, let's go to mum! Can we?" Seychelles asked England over cheerfully as soon as the lights were back on, her eyes shining in delight.

"You really liked the show, didn't you?" England noticed, smiling proudly at his daughter as he stood up from his seat.

"It was way funnier than a common opera," Canada offered, as he took Sealand in his arms and attempted to wake him up, "America would have appreciated it, I think, if he hadn't decided beforehand that it was boring..."

"This is because, if we are not talking about his shiny and pompous Broadway, he just doesn't care," Cuba offered his own piece of mind on the matter, glaring down at the still asleep America. "He doesn't know the meaning of the word *alternative*."

Canada sighed in approval and put a reassuring hand on his boyfriend's shoulder, while Japan just shook his head in disappointment and went to wake up his own husband.

When America finally woke up, England took the bouquet of flowers he had prepared for France and led the way outside.

"C'mon, France must be at least presentable by now," he told his family as he handed the flowers to Monaco.

As predicted, when they reached the backstage France was already out to the main corridor, chatting amiably with the leading actress as they were heading outside. He abruptly stopped as he noticed his family approaching, however, taking his chance to happily wave them hello.

"Look at who we've here! You came to get me?" France greeted them merrily. "How sweet, *mes cheris!*"

"You were wonderful, Francis," Monaco offered politely, rushing to hug and kiss her brother quickly before giving him the bouquet. "This is from all of us!"

"You shouldn't have, I'm just a substitute after all~" France thanked them with fake humility, even though it was quite clear how much he had appreciated the present.

Furtively, his eyes searched for England's and he grinned knowingly at him, easily guessing that the flowers were his husband's idea.

"Is she your girlfriend?" The leading actress took her chance to ask instead, a bit confused seeing the scene playing out in front of her.

England couldn't stop himself noticing how worried her tone of voice sounded, getting quite unnerved by the whole situation.

"I'm his sister, actually," Monaco answered with a forced smile, before looking behind herself at her brother in law, having noticed the same problem England had. She still disliked the older nation, but he was the one her brother had chosen, no matter her personal opinion on the matter.

"Yeah, *I am* the husband." England couldn't stop himself to point out coldly, eventually marching towards France to give him back the *Dover ring* he had entrusted him with before the play. "Here is your wedding ring, dear."

France stared with big surprised eyes at England's attempt at marking his territory, as he mechanically took back his ring.

"How kind of you, *mon cher*," he eventually said with a happy and a bit embarrassed smile. "*Je t'adore*, you know?"

"I hope so," England cut short, despite blushing in embarrassment at France's words and at his own jealous reaction. "Shall we go? Our reservation is in less than 10 minutes."

"Are we going to make it?" France asked curiously, trotting enthusiastically after his husband at the prospective of finally getting some food in his empty stomach. "Where did you reserve?"

"It's about three minutes from here," England explained coldly, still pretending to be so angered not to care about France's whereabouts. "And no, Francis, you will not make me speak French. You will read the name on your own when we get there."

France chuckled at his husband's remonstrations and moved to drape himself around his arms. He waved politely goodbye to the still flabbergasted actress and allowed England to lead the way towards the restaurant for the whole family.

When they got to England's chosen place, France could only approve of his husband's choice, while America just sighed in exasperation at the nineteenth century style decor of the Café. Everything, from the style to mannerism of the personnel, made him guess that it certainly wasn't a place where he could order hamburgers.

When he confided to his family his worries, Cuba and Canada were honestly surprised that America had understood that much by himself, and Japan just rolled his eyes and asked himself once again why he had married the American. He had gotten used to Japanese food only after he had discovered that it could help him with his diet, after all.

Despite America's initial remonstrations, France managed to find something edible even by America's standards, calming the family feud before Cuba and America could get at one another's throats.

Dinner went on quietly enough, allowing everyone to enjoy the family time and the artistic food that was brought to their table.

As soon as they had finished eating, they all moved to France's apartment to sleep since they all, except Sealand, had a plane to catch the day after –Monaco and Seychelles to Seychelles', Canada and Cuba to Cuba's and the rest of the family to Washington, where they were supposed to held their meetings.

Canada, America and Seychelles had their own room at France's apartment, therefore it was no problem for them to share it with their companion. Sealand, instead, found himself sleeping with his parents, since France hadn't gotten around finding an alternative solution yet. He had no chance to get a bigger house in the middle of Paris and he had no intention to move to the suburbs either. As long as Sealand remained a child, however, the temporary solution was fine for all the three of them.

"Have you *really* enjoyed the show tonight?" France asked England eventually, as he was wearing his pyjama. "You've always been against it."

England, who had been attempting unsuccessfully to put Sealand into his own night attire, simply looked up dubiously at his husband as he decided to try and block Sealand's movements by sheer force.

"The show was fine enough, you are really good at this –Sealand!" England stopped his answer to yell at his son eventually, glaring back at the child nation. "Would you mind staying put for a moment!?"

"But I have no need to sleep!!!" Sealand took his chance to complain, looking up at his English father with the most adorable stare he could manage. "Can we do something else?"

"Of course you are not sleepy, you slept during the whole play!" England complained, making France laugh heartedly at the both of them.

"C'mon, my darlings, let's not fight," France complained, going to help England with Sealand. "Tomorrow we all leave early, we can't stay up until late!"

Sealand pouted in discomfort, finally allowing his parents to dress him up for the night. When they were all in bed and Sealand was beginning to get sleepy in England's arms, France took his chance to tell his husband something he had wanted to confess for some time.

“You were really adorable tonight, *mon amour*,” he whispered to him softly, attempting not to wake up Sealand once again. “I’d like to see you jealous more often~”

“I *wasn't* jealous. Now, sleep.” England cut short, as brusquely as he could.

“You were,” France corrected, “the way you gave me back the *Dover ring* was an inch from kneeling at my feet and putting it back like when we got married~”

“You wish it, France. That happened once and will never happen again— *besides*, I was standing when I gave you the ring.”

France chuckled and moved closer to his husband to kiss him kindly on his forehead.

“I still love you,” France offered him, before he cuddled closer and closed his eyes to finally sleep.

England swallowed at the sight and held Sealand closer in his arms, as to reassure himself that such an abnormal family picture was actually real.

“Good to know,” England allowed himself to bite back in the end, before closing his eyes too and attempting to sleep.

Despite the early wake, it was certainly going to be a quite long night for the Englishman.

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The next day, most of the family departed together to the new world by airplane, much to France's discomfort since he didn't like airplanes at all.

Still, it was a quite pleasant trip for all the nations involved and, when his fathers-in-law went back to Europe, even the always silence-loving Japan had to come to terms with the fact that America's home now felt significantly *too* quiet.

He had just enough time to make such a consideration, though, that America was quickly jumping over him, draping himself around his shoulders and asking him loudly to accompany him to the other side of his country to try a new fast food he had seen on television.

As he freed himself from America's tight grip and turned to his husband to plainly point out how a stupid waste of resources his proposition was, Japan couldn't help but think about how difficult it would be going back to a quiet house the way it had been before knowing the American.

That was why, some years after, in September 2001, he suddenly got worried when his husband stopped blabbing nonsensically all of sudden.

They had been in the middle of a meeting in the office at America's house and the first thing Japan had thought was that America had eventually fallen asleep, as he frequently did. Japan

had been there essentially to keep an eye on the younger nation, after all, so there wasn't any surprise in America doing exactly what he wasn't supposed to.

Except that, when Japan went to shake him back awake, he found America's expression screwed in pain, instead, and his hand clutching tightly his shirt right over his heart.

"A- America-san?" Japan managed to say, before the personnel in charge of the mansion busted inside the office to check over their nation and hushed him slightly to the side.

Who had given the alarm, in the end, had been America's sovereigns, since Japan couldn't honestly move a single finger from the sheer panic he was feeling.

Accepting America's courting was supposed to be harmless and void of any scary consequences, so, why was this happening?

America was the stronger nation on earth, he was young, he had a solid economy despite the few crises here and there, and he'd had so few chances to fall ill that he barely understood the concept of illness. He was the complete opposite of a very old and tired nation like Japan was, therefore... what was happening?

Japan had never even considered the option of him having to support America being ill, his strength being one of the reasons that had made him eventually decide to take the risk and accept his feelings... so much for a nation like Japan, who considerably prided himself on always being prepared for disasters at least with a few back up plans.

Eventually, Japan managed to gather enough strength to at least get a hold of America's hand to give him courage, but only then did he actually notice the deep red blood spreading all over his husband's chest and the fear screwing up America's handsome features.

"*K'so!*" Japan swore, as he tightened his hold on America's hand to drag him into his lap and clean his mouth the best he could from the blood he had been coughing out.

Japan's desperate attempts to help America were seemingly enough to quieten the younger nation, reassuring him that he wasn't alone and in arms that loved him.

Glad that his presence could be somewhat helpful to soothe America's agony, Japan gladly took his husband even tighter in his arms, taking his chance to caress his hair in a manner he hoped could at least give America the strength to fight off whatever was happening.

Meanwhile, all around them America's sovereigns yelled information about what had happened to the Twin Towers, and screamed orders to whoever was supposed to have a say on the matter to get the young nation back to his feet or find a way to get another to substitute the broken one.

It was such a surreal situation that Japan, despite taking a mental note of the information he might need to help his husband, eventually decided to drag America to the furthest corner of the room, hoping that a bit of peace could be more therapeutic than medics themselves.

His plan somewhat worked for a while, until he heard America's choked scream and felt his hand clutching his arm even more tightly.

"America-san!" Japan yelled in shock, tightening his grip on his husband and shielding him from the medics and personnel who had suddenly surrounded them to check on their nation. "Leave us be!"

Japan's unexpected scream caused the whole room to go silent, allowing all the people there to hear a barely whispered thanks coming from America, before the tight grip on his husband became weaker and he fell unconscious in Japan's arms.

Only then Japan allowed back the medics to drag America to his room and to visit him properly, just as a young clerk rushed inside the office yelling about another attack, this time at the pentagon.

Left alone with his husband's sovereigns, Japan just glared back at them, daring any of them to even say a word about America's whereabouts and keeping his gaze resolutely in front of himself, as he walked quietly amongst them, directed to America's room.

America needed help, and Japan needed help to protect America.

Instinctively, his hand reached his pocket and found his mobile there. After a few moments of due consideration, Japan took it out and began dialling the number of the only people strong enough to help them through the mess currently happening in America.

He only hoped they could find a way to get to them soon enough.

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Considering how history was unfolding itself, France nor England feared significant hardships for the time being; that had made them feel particularly relaxed, enjoying the by now usual quarrels they had during meetings, as much as the nice feeling of talking about their different points of view slightly more seriously at the end of the day, in the safety of the home they were sharing.

"You know, you're still in time to sign up for getting the Euro," France was pointing out from the kitchen of his apartment, as he was finishing to fill up the milk jug he was going to add to his tray.

"I know, that's why I will never do it," England protested heatedly, annoyed by both his husband's insistence on the Euro matter and by the news he was listlessly watching on TV from the sofa. "Besides, if you really wished me to join, you wouldn't be speeding up the process. I *know* you are behind it!"

"You *know* why I'm doing this," France countered, taking the tray he had finally finished arranging to bring it to the coffee table.

“You could have conceived a less stupid plan to bind Germany to the rest of the continent,” England complained, his green eyes moving from staring at the television to observe the contents of France’s tray.

As his husband sat down next to him, England took the milk jug and put some milk in both his tea and in France’s coffee, before handing his drink to his husband.

“*Merci~*” France thanked him with a smile as he took his *café au lait* and started sipping it.

“You could at least let *me* make you coffee, you know? I *can* do that much without messing up,” England told France bitterly, taking a green macaron from the plate of sweets on the tray before starting to drink his own tea.

France grimaced at the thought and almost dropped his own cup.

“You sign up to enter the Eurozone and I will give you access to the kitchen, *mon amour*,” he countered, annoyed, earning England’s eyeroll at his reaction.

“Black Wednesday was enough, thank you very much. Keep your bloody coin and your even bloodier kitchen!”

“Oh, c’mon! It’s something that can happen in finance!” France protested heatedly after having finished his cup of coffee. “Nothing says it was related to the ERM and nothing says it prolonged your recession!”

“I don’t want to hear this from you, you can’t understand even the basics of it!” England countered, turning to glare at his husband. “And your stupid ideas for the Channel Tunnel had been a drain on *my* finances!”

“*My* stupid ideas? You little—” France’s tirade halted when he heard the familiar sound of the breaking news’ announcement coming from the television.

Both nations turned to stare at the screen, petrified at the sight of America’s Twin Towers burning and crumbling on LIVE television. Before they could even start to understand what the hell had been happening, the phone of France’s apartment rang and England rushed to answer, quickly followed by his worried husband.

“Japan? What the *hell* just happened?” England asked, as soon as he recognised the Asian nation’s voice. After some long seconds filled with rushed explanations, England decided to stop his friend. “Wait, I’ll call you back from my mobile. We’re going to get to you as soon as possible”

England was quick to put down the receiver and go get the mobile he had left in charge not far from France’s. Both phones were bleeping with messages from all over the world, apparently asking if they knew something about what was happening to America. France took his chance to get his own mobile then, and as England searched for Japan’s number, he dialled in his Prime Minister’s.

“I’ll get us a plane,” France explained in a low voice while waiting for the other Frenchman’s answer, as both of them rushed to their room to get some essentials for the trip to America. “Lionel? Are state flights allowed to departure? Is Jacques coming?”

In less than ten minutes –filled with intense exchange of information among all the four parties involved- France and England were already on a taxi directed to the airport to catch a plane directed to Canada. After reaching North America, it didn’t turn out too difficult to get to America’s mansion, especially thanks to the complicity of the nations already on site.

When they finally reached their son’s bedroom, however, America was still unconscious.

“America!” France yelled as he slammed open the room, only to be thrown aside by his husband, rushing inside with his same desperation.

“How is he!?”

Japan looked up at them from the seat he had taken near America’s bed, but just bit his lip in sorrow, whilst Canada, who was quietly resting with his back to the opposite wall, simply sighed.

“His physical condition is fine, but the shock is what’s keeping him unconscious,” Canada explained in a barely audible monotone.

“It’s honestly strange seeing him so much unresponsive,” Japan offered, his dark eyes looking back down to his husband, now sleeping peacefully. “I don’t really know what any of us should do...”

“Find out who did this to him and crush them, obviously,” England answered like it was the only option available, his fists clenching tight in sheer anger and determination.

“*Angleterre*, could you please stop making political statements, at least in this situation?” France bit back at him in a much more collected tone of voice, earning only his husband’s shocked stare on him.

“Are you telling me that you would be against such a proposal?” England asked flabbergasted, before pointing to their son. “Fuck it, France, he is your own blood!”

“That’s why *we* should be more reasonable than him, for once!” France countered seriously, attempting not to raise too much his voice. “If this really is a terrorist attack, it’s suicide to go after something without knowing where it is! We won’t solve this mess with a war against a single state –it’s way worse, you irrational man!”

“If I may,” Japan interrupted the lovers’ quarrel, easily getting the two nations attention on him. “France is right, you should discuss it back in Europe... because, if I know America well enough, he will do what England suggests even without any prompt.”

“And I’ll be at his side,” England concluded, looking away from his husband to walk towards America’s bed and check his conditions.



France and Canada glanced furtively at one another and then the older nation sighed, reaching once again his husband's side. He knelt down and rested his hand over America's forehead, taking his chance to brush away the fine strands of his fringe.

"He's slightly hot," France pointed out, before turning to Canada. "Can you bring a towel and some water?"

As Canada disappeared to get what he had been asked for, both Japan's and England's eyes could only stare at the French nation caring manners.

"It must have risen again. Yesterday he was burning hot... we had to use ice packs to make it get down," Japan attempted to explain, quite worried by France's realisation. "Even now he is under antipyretics... the medics thought that it would be enough considering that now the situation has more or less settled."

"Probably yesterday it was the terrorist attacks, but you need to consider that from today on it's going to be its consequences," France offered, moving his hand lower to caress kindly America's temple and cheek.

"I'm sorry for what I said, France," England murmured, his eyes glued on the reassuring movements of France's hand on America's cheek, "I don't honestly believe that you don't care."

A long silence followed, interrupted only when Canada came back with the water and the towel and walked back to his parents to place it on a nearby chair.

"Thank you, Canada," France offered his son, starting to wet the towel into the water before placing it over America's forehead. Only then he decided to answer his husband. "I've never been and I won't always be the more rational one between the two of us, *Angleterre*. Just... Just don't think that when it happens it is because I don't care."

England just nodded, despite knowing that France couldn't see it, and sat down on America's bed, resting his hand on his leg.

"Has he lost much blood?" England asked Japan, instead.

"He fell unconscious after the attack on the Pentagon," Japan offered unsurely. "There wasn't much blood back then."

"Shock more than blood loss, then. Canada might be right," England concluded, grabbing tightly the sheets in his hand.

"It's the first attack on his land, after all," France pointed out, still staring at America's face as he attempted to lower his temperature.

"That's what makes me say that he will get after them, no matter if what you have said before it's true," Japan confessed, staring wearily to France. "After Pearl Harbour he entered a World War, who knows what will happen now?"

The temperature inside the room lowered a couple of grades, prompting all the other nations to stare back at Canada, currently glaring back at Japan as a dark aura gathered around him and his glassed shaded white.

“I would suggest to leave the past be.” Canada threatened quietly, strongly reminding Japan of Sadako from the movie Ring.

Japan, however, just smiled back at him and turned to the other two nations to bring his speech to an awkward conclusion.

“Like I was saying, I’m quite sure that he will react as soon as he gets back to his senses.”

“We will have to find out a proper way to deal with both this situation and the consequences of America choices later, then,” France sighed aloud, taking his chance to dip once again the warming towel into the water.

“What do you mean, France?” England asked worriedly, kneeling behind France to hold him by his waist, silently asking him to turn and stare back at him.

France could only oblige his husband, to offer him a scared and unsure stare.

“That we will be next.”

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**T.B.C.**

# The war on terrorism

As Japan had predicted, as soon as America was back on his feet he got himself ready to wage war. While getting ready for it, he also followed a few leads that brought him to identify a proper target for his vengeance.

He soon proposed his plan to the rest of NATO, only to have his proposition rejected thanks to France's opposition. He went on with his strategy anyway, sided by his English father, while both parents kept working on a European level to produce a more reasonable military approach to the situation.

The so-called *war against terrorism* mingled with the workings of turning Europe into a proper project, making it more urgent and scarier at the same time.

The nation that eventually found himself right in the middle of the mess was France, who was unable to keep a reasonable grasp on both matters at the same time, especially considering how England had been siding constantly with America, no matter how stupid his propositions were.

If the year after the 9/11 France had eventually joined the properly organised and approved Task Force 150, when England and America attacked Iraq in 2003 France refused to join.

The political mess they had fallen into turned out to be a continuous request of military help, refusals, propositions and counterpropositions, so much so that most of Europe and the rest of NATO were secretly betting on the day in which France and England's marriage would implode, considering that the red zone of the debate was between them.

The two frenemies were forced to find a common ground only when France's prevision of disaster realised itself in 2004 with the first terrorist attack on European soil that sent Spain straight to the hospital.

When the year after the target was set to London, France substantially gave up attempting to play it like he was the more reasonable of the family. The sight of his lover falling all of sudden in his arms and his blood staining the white jacket he had been wearing red was honestly the last he could endure.

Still, attacks slowly spread all over Europe, contributing to building up a deep sense of fear through children who hadn't grown up with the knowledge of what a war could mean.

When the economic crisis added itself on the already disastrous situation, spreading from America to Europe, it gnawed away most of the ideals that had fuelled the European Union project, allowing those worries to reach also the hearts of their nations.

It made them fear for the worse to be just about to happen since they also had on their side the fresh memories of all the many wars they had endured. That made their view of the whole history way clearer, but also made them quite aware where the actual responsibilities laid.

Those considerations made France eventually give up, and as soon as he could he asked for his status in the NATO to be brought back to what it had been before the Cold War against Russia.

With France fully back into the NATO and the tightening of the European relationship amongst states, Europe looked stronger while at the same time it began to crumble. The bureaucracy –necessary to grant everyone their own assurances– and the military operations –thought to protect Europe from the terrorists– made the project feel more like a burden than an opportunity.

Unfortunately, did this not mean France and England's disagreements decreased, disagreements that the rest of Europe and NATO failed to fully comprehend most of the times; still, just to be on the safe side, in 2010 the rest of their allies decided to send the couple together to a series of missions.

France and England, who were attempting to still maintain a decently low amount of shared military projects for the sake of their marriage and their nerves, told all the other nations involved to fuck off, but eventually went to do the job anyway.

Despite their dislike for those missions, however, they turned out to be a good chance to have a honest talk with one another.

That was why, the next year, the rest of NATO deemed this forced military honeymoon the primary cause of France declaring war against Libya as soon as he could. The fact that England had given his approval to the attacks too easily just confirmed their suspicions – something that England felt no need to dispute.

At least, not to the other nations.

“France, would you mind telling me what crossed your empty head?” England prompted, as soon as they had gotten back to France's apartment in Paris after the meeting they'd had in Strasbourg.

“Why are you asking me the reason?” France asked as he divested with nonchalance of his coat and jacket. “You already said that you were siding with me!”

“I might want more information about why you're all too favourable to go to war *this time*,” England pointed out, hastily hanging his own coat to keep up with France's pace. “You know, since lately you've just been trying to pretend being this handsome angel of peace...”

France chuckled at the nickname and let himself fall lazily on the sofa before staring up at England.

“Lately, all you and America have been asking me is to go after some random people in random places for vengeance, *Angleterre*,” France explained matter-of-factly. “I hope you didn't really expect me to risk myself for such vague objective...”

“Then *why* is it that this time you're all for it?” England basically whined, letting himself fall sitting down near to his husband's legs.

"Oil seems a decent reason to me," France pointed out plainly, "and defeating a dictator is too."

"How is defeating a dictator more important than defeating the heads of terrorism!??"

"It's not more important, it is something I can do. With profits!" France countered, his cold blue eyes staring straight into England's confused green ones. "Risking to kill hundreds of civilians in a matter of principle to get nothing out of it is plainly stupid."

"You talk like this because you were not the one attacked—"

"You, America and Spain being attacked is enough for me... but the solution to this should be different," France admitted, averting his eyes from his husband.

"Oh, tell me then, you illuminated Republic," England provoked him, leaning over France in challenge.

"It's not something I will ever do, so it's pointless to talk about it," France countered annoyed, shrugging as he stared down discomfited at nothing in particular. "If I'm not the first up to do it, why should I preach to others?"

"Those are America's words," England recognised with quite a bit of surprise as he moved to stare at his husband's face better.

"I made a mess that time," France admitted, staring up at the ceiling with sadness before covering his face with both his hands. "If I didn't, maybe now we wouldn't be so hated that we get targeted by our own children..."

"I hope the world won't come to its end for what I said, but you did good with leading America to his independence," England offered him kindly, placing a caring hand over his lover's shoulder as he moved to lay at his side.

"The problems are elsewhere," France admitted to England eventually. "Inside of us."

"What do you mean?"

"How did I get to my Revolution, *Angleterre*?"

"You spent all your money and went bankrupt, you fucking git." England lashed back at his husband, earning only a smart smirk from France for his quick response.

"That's not the cause of my revolution, that's what caused the *actual* cause!"

"You said something back then..." England attempted to remember, cuddling closer to his husband for comfort. "That you felt *divided*."

"Yep, it's the same right now... but I don't have the same strength I had in 1789 to oppose those who brought me there," France admitted with a sigh, allowing one of his arms to embrace England's shoulders to hold him closer. "Besides, back then it was a person, a political institution... now it's economy. You know I'm shit at it."

"But cultural dominion is your forte still," England countered, side-tracked by France's plain admission of weakness.

"I don't have the strength to get through it. Despite the European Union, my culture has problems getting out my own borders... or maybe I should say *because* of it..."

"Is that why you went for Libya?"

"I don't believe it to be the final solution or that it will get me enough strength, but it is something I had to try."

"It's an old solution to an old problem," England took his chance to point out, staring up worriedly at his husband, "it might not work in the new panorama..."

"I-It's the only thing that came to my mind," France confessed guiltily.

"You're an idiot, you know?" England concluded, cuddling closer to France and basically making France to embrace him even tighter in his arms.

"Why are you calling me an idiot, now?" France asked surprised.

"You are making me question your choices, when we are on the same side for the first time in a long while!" England pointed out, making France laughing at him.

"It still feels strange being on the same side, does it?" France admitted serenely.

"I don't really mind it, but opposing you is honestly what made me stronger," England said with a sigh. "It's not like I believe that being on the same side makes me weaker, but fighting with you had always made my mind clearer on many things."

"It's the same for me, *Angleterre*," France admitted, rising England's chin up to allow their lips to meet in a gentle kiss. "You are an extremely pretty sounding board. What keeps us going is that we keep disagreeing even when on the same side~"

England chuckled at France's statement and allowed his forehead to rest against his husband's.

"I love you, France,"

"*Moi aussi, Angleterre*," France answered back at his husband. "Let's just hope that I'm not doing the worst thing I could do getting involved in this mess..."

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Despite the two husbands' hopes, things quickly got out France and England's hands and, even after NATO as a whole decided to intervene, things did not get better.

The terrorist attacks eventually got mixed up with a migration wave no nation was ready to deal with, and the still ongoing economic crisis turned every proposition into a cat fight and any sensible decision a reason to resent the European union and their fellow nations.

This was, at least, on a strictly *political* level, as the nations themselves were not able to truly understand what the actual news were on a *historical* level.

Migrations were what caused nations to be born or grow up, after all, so... what was the problem? They had worked through the ones they perceived as most dangerous even with less resources than they had now, or they had simply adapted or accepted the new situation to the best of their abilities, and they had persevered and survived. As such, the terrorist attacks in Europe paled in comparison to the devastation of both World Wars.

Still, back then everyone thought for themselves, except for some rare situations, so it would have never occurred to anyone to give the blame to their neighbours... well, unless they were France and England –but most of the time they were right in suspecting their lover.

England, during the few times he and France had quarrelled over the mess happening, had also pointed out that back then they were all mostly monarchies, but France had no real intention to fight with him about the limits of democracies on top of everything else... not with the frigging Monarchy his husband still was, no matter if the adjective ‘*constitutional*’ had been placed in front of it. England had never even *written down* that fucking constitution. What use did something have, if it wasn’t written and signed and printed in hundreds of copies?

The mess only got more complicated, though, making France and England’s disputes seem only friendly disagreements.

Moreover, the fights spread inside the very same borders of their own nations, generating cries about secessions, independences and desires to get lands that had been certified as part of another nation no more than fifty years before.

The European hysterics worsened so much that even Scotland and Wales eventually finished up their reserves of tolerance and got fed up with their brother, a situation that made England quite glad that after marrying France the first time they had agreed on splitting their time between their respective homes, work trips excluded. That restricted the conflicts with his brothers to the five months he was living in his own house in London.

Still, nothing was enough, and eventually in 2014 Scotland managed to secure a fair chance to leave the United Kingdom. In the end, Scotland didn't manage to get free from his brother’s dominion but the experience left England pretty much traumatised and France and England’s reserves of whisky rather empty.

England was still wondering whether he could address all his problems to France's blasted European project when something he had never thought to see again happened.

It was January 2015 and he and France were getting ready to exit France's apartment in Paris to get to yet another boring meeting. Before they made it out to the door, however, all of

sudden the French nation fell on the cold floor, shivering and holding his head tight in his hands.

“France!” England yelled at him, closing the door once again to reach his husband. “France! Honey, please!”

“Fuck—” France managed to mutter, before he had to grab his nose in order to stop the blood that had began flowing.

“France...” England managed to say, as he held his husband tightly to him.

“My brain burns—” France whined, not managing to stop himself from crying in pain.

“*Angl—*”

“France!” England barely succeeded to get a firmer hold of his lover before the French nation fell unconscious in his arms, blood still constantly flowing from his nose.

“Fuck this!” England swore.

In the moment of silence that followed, he finally noticed the loud noise coming from down the street. Somehow, something told him that the two things were related.

Therefore, he took his husband in his arms and moved him to lie on the sofa, having care to turn his head to the side, so that he didn't risk to choke on his blood while he wasn't next to him. Then he rushed to the window, in order to check with his eyes if France's condition and the chaos outside were as related as he feared.

After seeing a group of policemen running to one side of the main street and some scattered and terrified people running to the opposite side, he could say with certainty that what had happened to France depended on his children's condition.

That was both a relief and a problem, considering that there wasn't really much that he could do to help him. Still, he couldn't leave France bleeding to death.

England then returned to his lover to check his condition, and felt faint when he saw how much blood he'd lost in the few seconds he'd left him unguarded, and how cold his body was to the touch. He focussed to put all his knowledge at work, but he wasn't a doctor, and reason demanded him to call for one —after all, medics had helped both America and Spain— but they were most likely too close to where the problem was happening to get actual help.

If he couldn't deal with the symptoms, however, he could always work on the actual cause of his husband's distress. He only had to find out what the hell had happened in France so that he could understand what the heck it had caused to France's body.

He started dialling the 999 on his mobile, then, only to stop himself before calling and curse his own idiocy. He deleted everything, then, and dialled in 15, hoping for his French to be good enough that whoever answered wouldn't bother him for his accent.

“*Bonjour*, I'm sorry to bother, but I need help,” England offered as soon as he got an answer. “We're in the core of Paris.”



*"Bonjour, your area can't currently be accessed at the moment,"* came the quite obvious answer to the other side of the phone. *"Were you amongst the victims of the terrorist attacks?"*

"Not quite... listen, I'm a nurse, so for the moment telephonic help should be enough," England thought quickly, "I just need to know what happened in our area and to hear out a doctor about what could mean a strong headache followed by continuous nose bleeding."

*"It looks like you are asking for those answers as if they are all that is needed to make a diagnosis,"* the voice on the phone eventually pointed out, after a first moment of surprised silence.

"They are," England told her, hoping to sound pitiful enough to get that information without having to plea for it. "Could you please tell me?"

*"The journalists of the Charlie Hebdo journal have been victims of a terrorist attack, most of the editorial staff is dead. The whole Île-de-France is under siege, considering that there are several more attacks in the whole region, among which a group of people taken hostage in a Kosher supermarket,"* the young girl explained quickly, doing her best to sound as professional as she could, *"I'll redirect your call to the neurological department for a consultation about the symptoms you mentioned earlier."*

"Wait, a neurologist?" England stopped her. "Can it be brain damage?"

*"Is your friend awake?"*

"My husband. He isn't," England cut short, unsure about how the girl would handle the information.

*"I would say that a neurological problem is the best bet we can place at the moment, without seeing him,"* she answered plainly, absolutely unfazed by the added information.

And of course she wouldn't be, England had to mentally add, this was bloody France.

"I think I can work with this information, but please send someone our way as soon as you can get through us!"

*"Where—"*

"Get the Prime Minister or the President, they will know," England interrupted her eventually.

*"I beg your pardon?"*

"It's honestly a story far too long, but your President or your Prime minister will explain you how to deal with the situation properly. I'll try keeping Francis alive in the meantime." That said, he closed the call and rushed to the library where France kept most of the magazines, books and newspapers he read.

Unsurprisingly, England found out several copies of the same journal the nurse had mentioned.

England didn't need to look at more than a couple of front-pages to understand why they had turned out to be a potential target, and even less to understand why the attack had knocked out France so violently. Attacking freedom of speech, multiculturalism and laity in France was something that since his Revolution had been deemed unconceivable by everyone.

The fact that with a single series of attacks they had managed to violate the core of what made France's identity was something that could easily kill France, turning him into something entirely different from the nation he knew... and this was something England would *never* allow.

France had to survive this, but in order to do this he had to at least endure the damage, until someone could help him cure his body properly. England had to tamper his husband a tiny bit the only way he knew about... he could only hope that what he was about to do wasn't going to have consequences more dangerous to his lover than the attacks themselves.

Therefore, England left the journals he had retrieved on the nearest shelf and went back to his lover, who was still bleeding so much that a thick pool of blood had formed on the cushions where France's head rested. He leaned over his husband and turned his head towards him just enough so that he could kiss him properly. As their lips met, however, England poured back into France all his old magic, eventually adding also a fair quantity of his own for as long as he could, knowing his husband's resistance.

As soon as England broke the kiss, France coughed blood a couple of times before he went back being motionless, making England fear he had just made it worse.

After a throughout check of his conditions, however, England noticed that the bleeding had stopped and that France felt slightly warmer than before. All in all, England would deem it a success, even though he certainly couldn't predict what it would mean for France in the long run, since he had basically influenced his body to behave like he was way less atheist than it was.

He could only wait for the real doctors to come now, since France's body would soon fight off the magic and the damage to his body brought by the attacks would certainly show. As for the moment however the situation seemed stable, making England decide at least call back their family.

He got his mobile and sat down next to France, attempting to clean him and the sofa from the blood as best as he could while he explained the situation to the others; he had just finished calling Seychelles when president Hollande finally arrived, bringing with him some doctors, who had been informed of the specifications of their patient.

They quickly brought France to the hospital to give him the care he needed, leaving England and Hollande alone together.

"He wasn't bleeding anymore, does it mean that the situation is salvageable?" The French president asked dubiously, looking like the ghost of himself.

"It isn't. I just tampered with your perception of laity," England admitted, earning Hollande shocked stare on him.

"I beg your pardon?"

"I didn't have any other choice, if he had died you would have changed much more than that," England attempted to give an account of himself, looking at everything that wasn't his husband's sovereign. "What you do and what happened to his lands changes him, but also the opposite is true."

"I think I have to thank you, then," the French politician offered, "even though I'm sure that you've done it for yourself, rather than us."

"I did it for myself, but our goal was the same: saving France," England admitted, before offering some other information. "I spoke with some of the other nations, they will spread the hashtag *Je suis Charlie* on the networks. Hopefully, this should help France recover... as soon as he wakes up, that is."

"Thanks. Even though I don't understand how that will work," Hollande admitted quietly. "Securing the terrorist to justice might help too, I hope..."

"What will you do?" England asked dubiously, obviously not trusting any Frenchman he had the chance to meet.

"I think... that I can only close down Paris," Hollande confessed, being in charge long enough to anticipate the English nation screaming back at him.

"That's plainly stupid, you will worsen France's condition!" England countered irately, quickly proving Hollande's point.

"I have no other choice, we don't know how it could have happened," The politician offered meekly, obviously not prepared to shoulder the mess currently happening in his country.

England counted to ten in his mind not to lash back against France's president, and only because it might have hurt his husband, considering the situation.

"Believe me, suspending freedom in any way in France will just make it worse," England told him plainly, then, as soon as he calmed himself down. "Still, it's your choice to make, not mine. I have still a few calls to make, you should be at his side."

Hollande nodded at the English nation's words and turned to exit the apartment, stopping however halfway towards the door to turn and watch attentively England, currently searching for Italy's number on his mobile.

"England," he asked tentatively, "what if you nations and the medics can't save France?"

"Not a single person will consider themselves Frenchmen anymore," England answered deadpan, earning a scared look from the politician. "Luckily for you, however, plenty of what makes a Frenchman feel truly French is their hate against us, so you should be fine until Englishmen exists. And vice versa, honestly..."

“Plenty?”

“Yeah,” England admitted, furrowing his eyebrows in disapproval. “Unfortunately for you, the rest mainly was atheism and freedom... let's just hope that romanticism and culture work a bigger role into making your identity than what I thought.”

That said, he proceeded to call Italy, leaving a petrified president Hollande to deal with his fears alone.

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Eventually, both England and the medics' work managed to help France healing, even though the consequences of England's forced use of magic on a nation like France had left the Frenchman quite out of it.

Everything considered, England decided that it was better like that, however, since his husband had eventually survived the attacks and had been unconscious the whole time liberties had been reduced in his lands, as they attempted to find culprits and accomplices.

Still, seeing France so unlike himself was something that worried England to no end, especially considering that both of them had survived way worse way quicker.

The general idea that the world as they knew it was about to end was also confirmed when they were reached by the news of America and Cuba restoring diplomatic relationships. It certainly lifted a significant weight from their hearts, but it was difficult to guess what consequences it would bring in the long run. Especially considering that the situation in France still wasn't settled and they didn't know how to get out of it, but also because they couldn't be certain that America would honestly follow up to his promises once he had made them.

“*Angleterre*, do you have any paracetamol?” France whined one evening in the middle of November, from the alcove he had made himself with his blankets on the bed.

“No way I'm giving you more of it, you just got some!” England reprimanded his husband, as he ignored his request and busied himself with the laundry.

“At least don't yell at me...” France pleaded, sounding like the most pitiful being on Earth, “my head hurts...”

“Does it still hurt so much?” England asked worriedly, as soon as he had started the washing machine and had gone back to their bedroom to sit down next to his lover. “I thought that all things considered you would have healed way faster...”

“It's just quite a lot to unpack, I think,” France whined, migrating towards England to curl in his lap. “Besides, the political choices we're currently making are not helping me at all, no matter if I somehow can understand the reasons behind them.”

"Is there anything *I* can do?" England asked him quietly, placing a caring hand where he thought that his lover's back would be.

"Don't use anymore magic on me, *Angleterre*," France countered, sounding a tiny bit less done for than before, "it makes me nauseous."

"Idiot, I managed to save your life!" England protested heatedly. "We were cut out from everything!"

"*Angleterre*, don't yell..."

"I'm sorry, honey," England offered guiltily, caressing reassuringly the bit of head that popped out from the bundle of blankets. "Would you like some tea?"

"I want more paracetamol~"

"France..." England reprimanded his husband. "How come that you are like this all of sudden? I can't say you've truly recovered during this past year, but you did only fall ill a few days a month, but now... you seem like you've regressed to how you were just after the attack!"

France didn't answer to England's question, something that wouldn't worry England if not for the fact that he could easily feel his husband shake under his hands. England then stood quickly up and threw the blankets out of the way only to find France clutching tight his chest in what that looked like a stroke.

"Fuck it," England swore, rushing to the bathroom to get some nitro-glycerine and the portable device they had gotten to check heartbeats in this kind of situation.

As soon as he had brought everything back to their room, he injected France the proper dose of chemical and connected him to the machinery before deeming the situation desperate and proceeded to give him CPR.

Only when the situation had finally gotten back into his control did England let himself fall on the bed next to France, lazily getting back his mobile from the nightstand to check the news agencies about what the heck was happening in France now.

He didn't need to search much, since quite soon he found information about yet another streak of terrorist attacks in France. The worst one had happened at the Bataclan, this time, during a concert. Full of people from all around the world. While they were enjoying themselves.

Fuck it.

They would *never* get out of this.

England sent a few messages reassuring the rest of their family that France was alright but needed sleep, and then curled around his exhausted lover, dragging him into his arms by force. Somehow, feeling the solidity of his husband's body safe in his arms calmed him down a bit, even though he couldn't stop himself from eventually breaking down to simply cry.

England didn't really know what he wanted, but he needed to change something in his life, no matter what it was. The attacks in his homeland had devastated England, but what was happening in France would quickly destroy his husband if the attacks kept happening like this...

Something needed to change, and England could only hope that whatever him and his sovereign would concoct would at least be smart enough to drag all of them out from this mess.

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**T.B.C.**

# Brexit

## Chapter Notes

Warnings: I wrote this chapter in April, but since we still know nothing about what's going to happen with the Brexit, eventually I decided to leave it unchanged

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The change England's sovereigns produced was what would shortly after be called Brexit.

England wasn't really sure that it was a good solution to his problems and even less that a referendum was a good idea to approve or fight it, still he hadn't really been able to oppose the decision, no matter if he had at least managed to point out how they had just gotten out of a potentially dangerous referendum only two years before.

The only positive news in all this mess, for England, was that at least France had been slowly recovering after the last series of terrorists' attacks on his land that had knocked him out.

Since the day when the referendum on the Brexit was actually declared, England –along with France– had used up all his time drinking, fucking, drinking even more and fighting with most of the people who dared to talk with England about anything, since everything was interpreted by the island nation as a reference to the referendum.

Before long, not only did most of the European community give up on attempting to talk to the Nation or even say hello to him, but also Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

France, finding himself amidst the crossfire for both personal and historical reasons, decided to suspend almost everything potentially dangerous that could come to his and his sovereigns' mind, and followed England down his hole of anxiety.

When the 23rd of June 2016 came and England proposed another trip to the nearest pub in order to fall unconscious during the whole procedure, however, France pointed out that not only was he older and wished to keep his liver still working for the following years, but also that sending a drunk nation to vote wasn't the smartest idea ever.

Therefore, before England could throttle him for not abiding to his demands, France dragged out from his pervert mind his last resort: bondage.

It wasn't something new for them, but it wasn't a regular occurrence and they had never dragged it on for more than a couple of hours. Mostly, because both of them gave up quite easily to their partner's moans and pleas.

France's mind at a certain point worked out the realisation that bondage wasn't exactly the smartest idea but since he had run out of options during the whole campaigning towards the

Brexit, he had honestly to keep it as his last resort.

Besides, sex had never hurt anyone. Hopefully. Maybe.

Oh, hell.

It was early afternoon when France resolution had begun to break.

His husband was beautiful all tied up, trembling and sweating –but his heart couldn't really bear his needy cries anymore.

They had started early in the morning with cuddles and soft kisses, attempting to ease some of England's tension since his mind was still focussed on the Brexit referendum. As soon as he had surrendered to the mood, France had taken out some lingerie he had brought for the occasion and some strings made of soft leather and velvet.

As he left soft kisses and teasing bites all over his lover's chest, France had managed to slip a cock ring on England, and then an overly scanty leather suit that left completely bare his legs and arms, part of his chest except where it really mattered, and not much of his groin. Even though his cock was allowed to spring free and there was an opening between his butt cheeks, his balls were left painfully constricted instead.

After having dressed England up, he had proceeded to tie him up: wrists secured first together and then to the headboard, legs spread open to form an M, tied up firmly to the bed frame.

After France had managed to get England tied up –with quite a lot of fatigue and arousal– he had tortured him with most of the toys at his disposal: vibrators, feathers, ticklers, lashes and a pair of nipple clamps complete with a chain that linked together not only the clamps but also the leather collar he had put tight around England's neck.

He did not forget to vary his choice of gels and oily products he had at hand, too; sometimes, he made England's opening feel burning hot while he prepared him, other times he had him shiver with cold on his sensitive nipples –and other times he spread some stimulant on the tip of his cock and left him there to feel it, stopping only when England was close, at the last moment, after thrashing for a while in the throes of pleasure.

All this, together with France's skilled use of his mouth, tongue and hands, had quickly turned England into a complete mess, so much that the referendum was now the last thing on his mind.

It wasn't, however, France's depravity that was sending England's self-control to shreds. There was something more difficult for England to stand than having being allowed to come only once, or having given up any hope to feel his arms and legs anymore... the fact that France was still fucking clothed.

Sure, France was dressed with just pyjama shorts and a really thin shirt that scarcely did its job to cover his belly, but each time England had managed to almost strain his muscles in



order to brush against France or grab a hold of his soft skin, all he could feel was just that bloody forsaken cotton.

England needed the contact, he needed to feel his husband's skin against his. He goddamn needed to share with him all he had endured during the morning, his fears, his desires...

"France..." England eventually resolved to plea, hoping to move his husband to pity, "please, I want to feel you against me..."

"Now now, *mon cher*, we still have half a day to go," France reprimanded him. "If I lose my cool now, this whole project to keep you distracted from the referendum goes down the drain~"

"You will lose your head once again if you don't strip of that fucking pyjama! It's not even long enough to cover your groin properly!" England yelled back at France in anger, exasperated, frustrated, furious and incredibly aroused.

"I thought you liked it, *mon cher*~" France teased, deciding that he had given his lover enough break and that he could go back to molest him some more.

He used his fingers –currently covered with stimulating gel– to caress England's nipples, still constricted by the two rods of steel of the clamps; as he leaned over his lover to have a better access to his body, France was mindful to place himself at the perfect distance to make England feel the heat of France's body over him, but not close enough for England to actually touch him if he arched up in desperation. When his evil setting was ready, France focused on the nipple that felt hotter under his touch and took it into his mouth, lavishing it with teasing licks and breathing hair on it.

England groaned at the feeling, his muscles tensing in a vain attempt to break free from his bindings; the movement got France's attention and he attempted to put some more distance between them, consequently prompting England to arch his back upwards, only to end up with the chain that linked his nipples to his collar tightening painfully.

England let out a groan of pain and frustration, soon followed by a plain whine.

"France, I'll burn down your vines, if you don't get here!" He cried out in desperation. "I can't believe you are not aroused at all!"

"I never said I wasn't feeling it," France countered, his voice wavering only slightly as he licked his lips, slowing drying up at the sight of England's fury. "And beside that, you can't burn my vineyards. We're in the same economic community, even with the Brexit you wouldn't be able to get out of the treaties..."

Before England could tell him to go screw himself for all he cared, France tongue was back on his skin to tease the other nipple, as his hands moved lower to caress with the tip of his fingertips the outline of the extremely constricted balls from above the leather.

The double stimulation made England choke down his reply in a silent gasp.

He attempted once again to get away from his lover's teasing touches, this time squirming out of France's hold. France had trapped him well though, loose enough to struggle but tight enough to prevent him from escaping where France didn't want to. And where the bindings were not holding him down, there was France, restraining him and preventing England from escaping the pleasure he was receiving.

"Why the fuck am I even having a referendum, if I'm not even allowed to send your production of wine to ground zero!?" England managed to get out eventually, struggling desperately like a wild animal fallen into a trap.

"Most of Europe is wondering the same thing... some even with these same words..." France pointed out with just a bit of hilarity, as he trailed his fingers down from England's balls to even lower, to tease his perineum and his entrance.

"Fuck it, France, not this thing of us being cat and dog again!" England yelled with a sharp cry, barely understanding from where the pleasure was coming at all. "And if you are going to fuck me, just do it! This was supposed to be bondage, not BDSM!"

France chuckled and granted England a soft kiss on his lips, before stopping everything he was doing but for the finger that was prodding his entrance.

"We are, *mon cher*, that's no way to deny it," France whispered to his ear seductively, managing to arouse England more with his tone of voice than with many of his games so far, "it just turned out to be our hobby, as I had hoped for in 1904~"

The reminder that no one in the whole world gave a fuck about their relationship despite the bloody *Entente Cordiale*, mixing with the feeling of the tip of France's tongue darting out to tease the shell of his ear, eventually had England reach the snapping point.

"Enough!" England yelled at the top of his lungs, sitting up swiftly and reversing their positions quite effectively.

France's confused stare lowered to look at the strings of leather still dangling from England's wrist, making him notice easily how it had been sharply cut.

"That's unfair, *Angleterre*, you made your fairies help you!" France complained, pouting up at his husband in annoyance. His attitude, however, changed drastically as he noticed England staring evilly down at him. "*A-Angleterre?*"

England was currently towering over him, his eyes glowing with pure evil and mischief as his grin turned more and more threatening as the seconds passed by.

"I'll show you what the British Empire can do, princess," England threatened in a low growl as he proceeded to check the state of France's hardness between his legs. Feeling his husband rock hard, he teased his length just a little, gloating in delight as he earned France whimpering in need. "Guess who's turn is to suffer~"

"E-England, *mon amour*-" France's words stopped dead in his throat as England produced from his bedside table a small army knife.

“What about BDSM, my dear?” The island nation offered, grinning madly at his husband. “Let’s show those weak and arrogant Europeans from the continent who is the only one fucking allowed to hurt you, no matter the treaties~”

“A- *Angleterre*... that’s just a play, *non*?”

“Of course, my love,” England reassured him in an absolutely not reassuring way, his grin growing even eviller than it already was as he saw France swallowing and turning slightly paler. “You don’t have to fret, princess, it will be just like before this stupid Europe even started...”

To give more strength to his promise, he cut open France’s top and began caressing with desire his husband’s chest, eventually covering his lover with his body completely as he started kissing and biting his collarbone.

“We have our *Entente Cordiale* to deal with one another, we don’t *need* Europe,” England reminded France in a growl before biting down his husband at the base of his neck so hard to break the skin and allow some blood smear France’s perfect skin.

France moaned in pleasure at the bite and attempted to hold England closer against him, only for England to snatch France’s wrists in his hands and pin them above their heads.

“Hold on, *mon cher*, I thought you said don’t touch~” England reprimanded him in a mock French accent, attempting to imitate in the worst way he could manage France at the beginning of their tryst.

He searched quickly for France’s case of toys and retrieved another leather string with which he tied up his husband’s wrists and secured it to the lower bedframe.

“Everything will turn once again how it was before this stupid European project, my dear France,” England explained to his husband, sounding more and more mad. “If we do whatever thing, it will be just for the two of us, would it be me loving you or me burning you bloody vines—”

“A-*Angleterre*, it’s too late! We can’t back off unless we do it all together!” France attempted to remind his lover, despite England’s ongoing manhandling on him.

“Oh really?” England countered, as he got rid with a swift work of his knife of France’s shorts, allowing his cock to spring free.

England licked his lips in anticipation and, having confirmed with a quick glance that France was alright with this, he moved between his legs to tease it with long and teasing licks. Now it was France’s turn to moan in need, and it certainly didn’t help him the fact that England had soon stopped teasing his cock to start making small cuts on the inside of his legs to lick and suck greedily on them.

“A- *Angleterre*, please-” France moaned, soon beginning to lose his focus.

“Please, what? Allow me to fuck you? Fuck me?” England asked, moving from between France's legs to get more lube.

“Please, don't leave the EU-” France's words died in his throat as England began coating his cock with plenty of lube. “I was so happy to finally work on a project with you...”

“I can't really do much with a referendum, now, can I?” England countered, fighting to keep his voice even at the sight of France's reaction to his quick hand job. “But one thing you can bet on: I'll show them all how hard to break are the France-United Kingdom relationships. I'm sick of the others meddling in my economy, in my foreign policy and now even with my husband, it ends *now!*”

“*A-Angleterre! I will help you with that, but I beg you, think it over-*”

As an answer, England just lowered himself on France's cock effectively impaling himself on his lover's hard shaft. He heaved a sigh at the sensation he had desired the whole day, and soon he started to move himself on him.

“France- you feel so good...” England managed to moan eventually, as soon as he got his breath back.

“Thought you wanted to cut me up,” France offered his lover, fighting with himself not to thrust up into England's warm heat and risk hurting him.

“I will do it later... I needed to finally feel you... I want to keep feeling you, France—”

“You will never lose me,” France attempted to reassure him, loosing himself into England's eyes. “No matter what the others do.”

“I love you, France,” England managed to mutter, right on the edge of climaxing, and with a sudden change of pace, he also sent France over the edge.

“*Je t'aime aussi, Angleterre... no matter what will happen.*”

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The day after, Scotland went in search of his brother, wondering why the hell he wasn't already asking for a meeting with their sovereigns to tackle down the disastrous results of the vote.

After having asked around and searched each and every crevice of the house except one room, he directed himself to the bedroom like a man condemned.

He opened uncertainly the door, hoping not to find his brother and brother in law fucking like animals in heat. As he took in the scene in front of his eyes, however, he had to wonder why he hadn't been lucky enough to find them simply having sex.

Both nations were sleeping soundly, England cuddling in France's arms and looking like the cutest angel on Earth. That is, *if* he didn't know his brother as well as he did. To give credit to Scotland, in fact, around the peaceful looking couple was scattered a so variegated selection of toys that looked like a sexy shop after a hurricane or a sex dungeon left abandoned.

What worried him the most were the evident smears of blood on the sheets, all over the carpet and on some of the toys. There was no doubt that, knowing his brother, most of it was France's.

"What the fuck have you done, brother?" Scotland asked quietly, his tone betraying only slight disappointment.

"Scotland?" England managed to ask, only barely awake.

"You have better start thinking about how to deal with all the European citizens living in the United Kingdom, your husband included. The yes won, we're getting the Brexit," Scotland announced coldly, already turning to leave. "Or better, *you* are having a Brexit, because *I* sure as hell won't. Get ready for another referendum since you like them so much."

That announcement startled England enough to make him wide awake.

"Scotland, wait!" He yelled as he sat back up, his heart sinking as he stared at the retreating back of his brother.

It was too late though, and Scotland had already slammed the door behind himself. England swore at the whole situation and stared down at France, who had turned to the other side, most likely pretending that he was still sleeping.

"France, wake up! I need help," England stated plainly, glaring down at France.

"I'm awake, but I can't really help you with this one," France muttered, quite sleepily despite his perfectly coherent words. "You brought it on yourself, *mon cher*."

"I thought that you had sworn to stay by my side in good and bad times!" England complained, earning France's suspicious glare on him.

"I *can* and I *will* stay at your side as your husband and as your ally, but I can't really do much about this as a nation inside the European Community. *Physically*, I'm not allowed to do that unless my people have a sudden change of heart about the EU."

"The hell?!" England swore, letting himself drop back down on the bed, so that France could turn once again towards him and hold him in his arms.

"C'mon, *mon amour*, it won't happen in a couple of days," France attempted to reassure him. "In two years we might be able to find a decent alternative."

"I hope so, because I fear I didn't really think this through..."

---

As England had predicted, no matter all the small loopholes he had put in place to protect himself, leaving the EU turned out to be way more complicated than predicted. Worse than that, it turned also out to be ineffective to his own personal aims and much less so to his children's: the following year the terrorist attacks resumed on both British and French soil and, each time England managed to maintain an advantage for his economy during the negotiations about the Brexit, he ended up also being doomed to lose another one without discussion.

Scotland had eventually stopped talking with his brother altogether and so did Northern Ireland, making England fear that, more than breaking the Europe project, the consequences of the Brexit would be destroying the United Kingdom. Wales kept being his gloomy and disapproving self, but at least in his case it seemed doing so more to disapprove England on a matter of principle than because he had vested interests in the European project.

The consequences however kept getting worse and made England eventually plead mercy to France, something that his husband wasn't really keen on doing. France's resolution to help England with the Brexit, in the end, had actually turned out to be plainly making the Brexit fail, a resolution that England wasn't entirely sure he agreed upon.

Brexit wasn't a certain the solution to all his problems, but, as France had done with the Libyan war, going back to being independent was an old solution to an old problem and he honestly wanted to try it out. Certainly, France's way to try the old way had brought hell over his head, but England wasn't really going to bother with anyone's foreign affairs... not directly at least.

Moreover, France had his own problems at the moment as well, considering that he and his sovereigns were basically living separated in the same home, something that hadn't really happened in a long time.

Still the chaos kept escalating, sending England straight towards a Brexit without deal –with consequences he couldn't fathom for his country and his kingdom– and France towards several failed attempts to secure some kind of deal for himself with Germany, just in case England actually left and he ended up alone to deal with the German nation.

The clamour that spread around England and France's choices, however, was what unnerved both nations the most, making both of them realising that England had been into something when he had opposed coming out as a proper couple.

France's attempts to make the Brexit fail, first and foremost, were received as attempts to start another war between the two rivals, in favour of a deeper relationship with Germany; this was something that in November 2018 prompted France to declare officially –and without any actual contingency– that the friendly and cooperative relationships between England and France would continue, no matter how the Brexit would turn out.

France's declaration ended up barely heard, but lowered the temperature of France and Germany's political relationship by several degrees, eventually ending up in Germany plainly opposing the proposals that France cherished the most.

After the first postponement of the Brexit from March 31st to April 12th, France was however about to declare his own victory, since he felt like there was no way that England could move on with the Brexit. He dragged into his celebrations his own minister for European affairs as well, convincing her to call her cat Brexit in mockery of the delay.

As the 12th of April approached, however, the matter turned even more desperate, bringing France to the decision to not personally attend the last debate on the Brexit.

As his husband and his own sovereigns worked hard in Strasbourg to get more time to reach some kind of deal, France retired himself at a nearby bar, sitting at one of the tables outside, to stare at the palace where his lover's debacle was happening.

When Italy joined him along with his brother, he found his sulking cousin slumped over his own chair and smoking, a glass and a half full bottle of wine on his table.

"You don't look really well, Big Brother," Italy greeted him kindly, earning only a hateful glare from his cousin for the trouble.

"I'm sorry for the renegotiation of the TGV after you already finished the drilling on your side!!!" Italy offered abruptly, without even being asked directly about it.

Seeing that France's glare was still on him and quite hateful, however, he tried another topic.

"I'm sorry for having my ministers bothering your national affairs against the will of your government!!!" Italy excused himself, again without results.

"I'm sorry I'm focusing more on your way to deal with the migrants instead of improving my own failing system!!!"

It still didn't manage to change a bit of France's glare towards Italy.

"I'm sorry that no matter what happens in France my children invade the French socials writing mockery in Italian, especially on the page of your Charlie Hebdo! I admit it, no one even *reads* the journal, we can't write in our own language, much less can we read French~"

Still, France's glare remained reproachfully firm on Italy.

"I'm sorry about still bothering you about the Mona Lisa, I get it that you regularly bought it but--"

"Oi, Veneziano!" Romano eventually interrupted his brother's pleas for forgiveness, placing a hand on his shoulder. "If you keep asking France clemency for everything we do to bother him, in three years we'll still be here."

"But I wanted to cheer him up a bit~" Italy countered sadly, this time actually earning a resigned sigh from France.

"There's nothing you can do, Italy, but thanks for trying anyway," France offered them, prompting even Romano to sit next to him and stare concerned at him.

"It's not just the Brexit going forward, is it?" Romano asked, as Italy sat next to his brother only to drape himself over his brother and take a deep sniff of his cousin.

"You smell like smoke, Big Brother, and it's not from the cigarette," Italy added, staring worriedly at France.

"Paris is burning." Was the only thing France could manage to say as a way of explanation.

"Can't you do anything?" Italy asked him then.

"My government is doing something, but it's not really what we *should* do..." France admitted, taking a last gulp of smoke before putting out his cigarette into the ash holder and exhaling the smoke listlessly in front of himself. "I don't see how we can get out of this. I feel like my last one hundred years of work to prevent another World Wide War have gone down the drain..."

"We all make mistakes, Big Brother, it's not like it's completely your fault," Italy offered kindly, staring down to Romano's legs in shame. "We all should have done differently many things and we also should have been way less selfish..."

"Veneziano..." Romano reprimanded his brother, though without any real anger, "there's no one sitting around this table or currently debating inside that palace in front of us that can honestly say he's not egoistical or that he has never done something wrong—"

"That's why I'm saying it!" Italy pointed out, eventually sitting straight in his brother's lap. "We're all at fault here!"

"It's not like I feel particularly guilty, mind you," France pointed out plainly, taking a sip of his wine as he waved arrogantly his hand at his cousins. "I acknowledge all the faults that are not mine, especially yours, Italy. You in particular have an honourable score of always blaming your allies and the European Union instead of yourself... my my, I never knew a nation so unwilling to solve their own problems as you are..."

Both Italies felt all the feelings they had for their cousin dry up in their chests, as they stared annoyed at France's dramatic scene.

"Still, I took way less care than I should have on this project. I'm certainly not innocent in all this mess," France continued, giving up once again his pretentious character to resume a sadder and submissive one, "and even if I did everything good, the Union still is crumbling. And I can't deal with Germany without England... look at him, he has no qualms into putting me under when we vote in the European commission, and I don't even get sex as a bonus like when England does it!"

"This is way too much information, you bastard~" Romano pointed out irritably.

"Big Brother..." Italy offered meekly instead. "Germany thinks that he is doing what's best for his people!"



"That's the problem. We are all thinking about what is best for us even when we shouldn't, because the best for all of us is to work together..." France whined, putting his feet up on his seat to hide his face behind his knees. "I'm scared of Germany, Italy... And I'm scared of my own weakness to the mess happening inside my lands... I don't want another World War to destroy Europe and in particular I don't want to be part of all *this*!"

The two Italies stared worriedly at their cousin's desperation and shared a quick glance between them. Then, Italy moved to embrace France tightly and Romano offered a compassionate pat on his shoulder.

"We nations can't give up hope, no matter what our politics decide," Italy reminded France kindly. "Trust all of us and yourself, Big Brother."

"But we don't have a child Europe running amongst us," France pointed out. "The truth is that the project was bound to fail from the very beginning!"

"Do we really need to die to collaborate amongst us?"

"Well, we've proven to be unable to work together otherwise..."

"Big brother," Italy called for his cousin, manoeuvring them so that he could straddle France and embrace him better. "We are not our sovereigns, *we* can do it differently."

"But we can make decisions only through them!" France reminded him. "That's the problem with representative democracies, like my husband loves to point out..."

"Great Monarchy he is," Romano countered, annoyed, "getting almost fucked up by a referendum, getting screwed by another one and risking at least a third!"

"That's harsh, Brother," Italy scolded him, "besides, shouldn't elections and referendums be a good thing, if we don't like how Europe is going? Thanks to them we can keep the governments' schedules adjourned. In the modern age, it all started thanks to you, Big Brother." He concluded, turning to stare back at France.

"Wonderful thing I started... I don't really know if that was good anymore," France said almost to himself, despite holding back Italy tight around his waist and hiding his face in the crook of his neck. "I don't see much ahead of us at the moment."

"Big Brother..." Italy sighed tiredly, as at the same time Romano offered *almost* kindly "Brother France."

"Family reunion?" England's voice came to interrupt whatever more the two nations wanted to say.

"Hi, honey," France offered him worriedly, looking up at him from Italy's shoulder. "How did it go?"

"Halloween Brexit, we'll adjourn the debate on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October," England concluded, dropping his working bag on the seat next to France. "I highly doubt we will reach any resolution by then, though."

"I don't know what to hope for anymore," France countered meekly, watching England sitting down by his side and order more alcohol for himself.

"Me neither, but I hope to have decided on something by the end of October," England offered plainly. "What about you?"

"Don't leave Europe, *Angleterre*," France just pleaded, leaning towards him enough that he could rest his forehead against his husband's shoulder. "Please—"

"France, you know that Brexit or not it won't change anything, do you?" England attempted to reassure his husband, caressing kindly the top of France's head.

"Won't it?" The French nation asked, staring up doubtful at his lover.

"Of course not, you idiot!" England told him, allowing his hand to trail down until it reached France's chin and left it up a bit, in order to kiss him lightly on his lips. "Brexit or not Brexit, we will always stand by one another, won't we? You said so yourself!"

"*Angleterre...*"

"Nothing will change, honey, I promise."

"But everything is breaking!" France protested, dragging Italy closer to him for comfort as he moved to hide his head in the crook of England's neck. "Fascists are growing in number once again, we all hate our neighbours, our economy is turning rich people richer and poor people poorer, businesses don't want to pay taxes nor their workers properly, unions are ignored and resented, rebels are attacked by the Police—"

"France!" England stopped his husband, before turning to Italy. "Can I get my husband back for a while?"

Italy nodded and quietly dismounted from France to move back to sit on Romano's legs, expecting England to drag his husband onto his own lap. Instead, England just took Italy's place, straddling a quite surprised France and embracing his neck tightly.

Italy smiled happily staring at the scene, whilst Romano just blushed a deep scarlet and took on himself the task to leave the two husbands alone. He took his own bother's hand in his, then, and dragged him hastily towards the European parliament with the plain excuse to do something productive for once.

France and England both stared at the two Italies' retreat quite surprised, before they just smiled and focussed once again on one another.

"I missed you, you bloody git," England offered France, as the French nation enclosed him in his arms.

"Me too, *Angleterre*," France admitted, tightening his hold on his lover.

As he went for a kiss, however, England simply stopped him.

"We're getting a cat, by the way," the island nation said, apparently completely out of the blue.

"Uhm?"

"And we'll call him Brexit."

"Oh, that!" France realised immediately, swallowing in guilt and looking elsewhere. "Then you talked with my—"

"Yes, she was so kind to tell me how it was *you* who suggested her the name for her bloody cat," England explained in a deadpan, crossing his arms on his chest and staring back reproachfully at France. "I knew I couldn't leave you alone with your own government, too many French..."

"Are you angry, *Angleterre*?" France asked docilely.

"In all honesty... I'm glad." England's admission earned him France's astonished stare.

"*Glad*?"

"Yeah, it makes me sure that hope still exists," England told him kindly, staring back at him with eyes so full of love that France actually worried about the reason of it in such a contest. "For Europe and for all of us."

"*Angleterre, mon cœur*, has Brexit made you lose your mind?" France managed to ask eventually.

"I'm serious, France!" England complained, taking his chance to shamelessly lick France's bottom lip hungrily before kissing him properly and deeply.

"And hot," France completed his lover's statement as soon as England let him go, despite being still quite dazed by the heated kiss. "Quite the change for a nation that feared even being seen holding hands properly~"

"Quite a change, indeed, because things *are* bound to change," England pointed out seriously. "What has never changed in the last millennium, however?"

"Your inability to cook?" France teased England with a smart grin that didn't manage to make England's own smirk falter.

"Close enough," England countered plainly, much to France's dismay. "You pestering me."

"Oh, *Angleterre*, and here I thought you were being romantic~" France complained annoyed, rolling his eyes at the joke.

"*And*, our love for one another," England concluded however, making France turn his head towards him. "Thanks for showing me that some things will never change. I really did need it."

“*Mon cher*, almost a millennium passed since I realised that I couldn't live without you. If there's something you can bet on, it is my love and devotion for you and the certainty that I will always mock you!”

“And is there *really* anything else that we need?”

France took his time to think about England's words, and eventually a warm smile morphed on his lips as the full realisation of his husband's words downed on him.

“Well, it all depends on you... *I'm not rich, but I'm shining bright*,” France offered, grinning up at his husband and hoping he would get the quote. “I might not be enough for you.”

“Of course you are, *because I can feel the universe, when I'm feeling you breathe*,” England answered back in France's same way. “Especially *'cause this kind of love is gonna be our only hope*...”

“Of course it will be, we have already covered the topic about me having the resources and you the strength and money,” France took his chance to point out haughtily.

“You are an idiot, France!”

“And *here I can see my Kingdom now*,” France teased, laughing heartedly at his husband as England groaned back at him in irritation before just giving up being angered at his lover.

“Yeah, your poor United Kingdom that you keep teasing and loving since we were born...”

“And there *really* is no one else I ever needed throughout history,” France admitted, moving his head lightly upwards to meet England's lips in another soft kiss. “You are right, *Angleterre*, why should anything change between us in the future?”

After all, if they had survived the last millennium together, they could certainly survive the next one and the one after that, and so on and so forth, until the end of their existences as nations... Every millennium like the previous one, throughout history.

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## THE END

### Chapter End Notes

A/N: The quotes near the end are from the French and British entries in Eurovision 2019. Unfortunately, in my attempts to understand what sounded weird about their choice of lyrics, I had the bad idea to mix them together... They finally made 100% sense (to me).

Thanks to whoever was kind enough to leave a comment, and thanks to Stars of Yaoi/Lacertae for the Beta reading and the banters. Thanks also to England, who gave

me a good point to start, and to Italy, who suggested me how to finish this Opera Omnia.

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